

DEAN DELAMONT INTERVIEWED - MGB V8 ROAD TEST

AUTOSPORT

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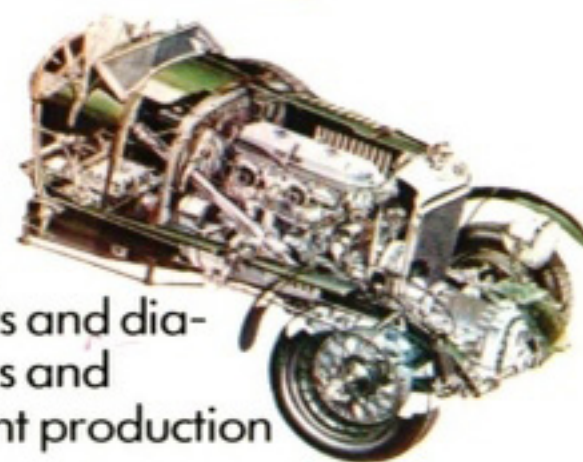
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AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

December 27, 1973. Volume 53 No 13

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Usually this sign appears because of snow or fog on Boxing Day but the sad fact this season is that it went up two weeks beforehand and was nothing to do with adverse elements.



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EDITORIAL

Although the 1973 season has terminated in a state of depression virtually worldwide with the current fuel situation, it has been a particularly good season as regards the popularity of the sport, particularly in Britain. The major circuit owners have reported an excellent year with the introduction of non-motor sporting personalities being a very well received innovation. For 1974 that particular aspect of racing promotion seems certain to expand although perhaps lessons learnt from this year's experiments will iron out the problems which sometimes afflicted these activities. But the non-motoring element is not the only reason for increased support from the spectator, for Silverstone Circuits have also had a very good attendance spectator record without resorting to the "pop" star innovations.

Which is the better method? Only time will tell but common belief is that to encourage the non-sporting spectator who was drawn to the celebrity races to see the "star" names to come back again, the motor racing programme and meeting has to be made simpler so that it is not so difficult to understand Group This and Formula That, and the assorted championships. Because apart from perhaps the amenities at certain circuits, the spectator has very little else to moan about.

The standard of our national motor racing has been of a particularly high nature this season, with full fields and closely fought racing at most of the championship race meetings. Certain organisational standards have sometimes marred the possible success of some championship meetings but in most cases the circuit owners keep a very close eye on the situation and take immediate steps. The success of the sport brought in more sponsorship too and with the sport riding a crest of a wave, it was therefore a terrible blow when the fuel situation brought about the prospects of a complete reversal.

On the international side, 1973 will be remembered for Jackie Stewart's great achievements, but also for the tragedy which occurred at the Dutch Grand Prix. The world was disgusted with what happened at Zandvoort on that July day and much argument immediately followed on the rights and wrongs of various fire fighting methods. But what has happened since? The proposed evaluation of the RAC and Jo Siffert Advisory Council systems has been continually postponed while the CSI have already drawn up their circuit safety requirements for the 1974 season. Yet again it appears that once all the immediate outcry has subsided, the urgency of the matter no longer exists until another tragedy occurs.

It is, on the other hand, extremely heartening that the outstanding bravery shown by David Purley in attempting to rescue poor Roger Williamson and by Mike Hailwood in his assistance in rescuing Clay Regazzoni at South Africa, has been recognised with the awarding of the George Medal to both Purley and Hailwood. It's the first time that a racing driver has been awarded a George Medal, the highest award possible, and for both drivers' efforts to be acknowledged in such a manner is very fitting.

our cover picture

Jean-Pierre Nicholas/Jean Todt scored a number of successes in International rallies during 1973 which helped to give Alpine-Renault the World Rally Championship for Makes. Our review of home and International rallies starts on page 18. Photo: Hugh Bishop

George Medals for Hailwood and Purley



Mike Hailwood.

We are delighted to report that the Queen has awarded George Medals to Mike Hailwood and David Purley for the outstanding bravery which they showed in rescue attempts during this season.

This is the highest award that the country can give and Hailwood's assistance in rescuing Clay Regazzoni from his burning



David Purley.

BRM and Purley's magnificent single-handed efforts in trying to save Roger Williamson at Zandvoort rightly earned the two drivers this honour and admiration.

It is the first time such an award has been made to a racing driver and never has it been more deserved.

Chevron progress

Graham White told us last week that Chevron are pressing ahead with their development and production plans as usual despite the current uncertainties.

The two works-supported VDS Chevrons were sent by ship to New Zealand for the Tasman series a couple of weeks ago and Peter Gethin and Teddy Pilette are due to go this weekend. The cars will be B24s but with a new split nose and it is possible that some new suspension ideas will be tried in the second half of the series. Derek Bennett will incorporate the new ideas on the B28 F5000 car which is currently being worked on.

As the cancelled Springbok series prevented development work on the new B26 sports car "a top British 2-litre driver" will be testing it at Paul Ricard next month.

Chevron are very interested in continuing in F2 next year and according to White "it could be very good, there have been some interesting developments." Asked about the annual Chevron F1 rumour White said, "Not yet."

Steinmetz, the German Opel tweekers, have recently become Chevron agents and recently exhibited cars with Schnitzer-BMW 2-litre engines at the Essen show.

TT muddle: new winners?

It was noticed at the FIA prize-giving that the Silverstone Tourist Trophy results were missing from the results of the European Touring Car Championship, with the addendum that the results were not received from the organisers. The RAC and BRDC maintain that the results were sent registered post straight after the event but were obviously not received by the CSI while the CSI also maintain that not only the results but also the regulations were not sent to them despite many requests. It is a rule of FIA Championship regulations that national governing bodies send such information to the CSI.

The question now is will the points be added at a later date, because if they are not it makes a significant difference to the results of the 2-litre class. With the Tourist Trophy included, Ford of GB win the division with their Escorts but if the Silverstone points are discarded then the 2-litre class title goes to Alfa Romeo.

● We regret to report the death of Ed Harris last week after a long illness. Mr Harris from Epworth, Doncaster, was well known as an RAC Steward and served on the RAC's Competitions Committee. To his wife Mona and his family, AUTOSPORT offers its deepest sympathy.

Amon confirms Amon

Chris Amon confirmed in his January column in *Competition Car* that he will be building his own F1 car for next season.

The car will be called an Amon and has been designed by Gordon Fowell, who of course drew up the Goral Tecno chassis. Amon said in the magazine that the "Goral Tecno was one of the best chassis I've ever sat in. It felt right the first time I ever drove it." The big problem with that car was the hopeless Tecno engine, the new car will have a Cosworth DFV.

Chris Amon, Gordon Fowell and John Dalton have set up the new company to produce the Amon and it will be based in Reading.

The Amon will not just be the Goral Tecno with a DFV but a

completely new chassis with several new ideas incorporated which Amon predicts will make it one of the most sophisticated F1 cars next season. The chassis has been built by John Thompson in Northampton while the bodywork was designed by Professor Tom Boyce who did the Goral car. Three cars will be built and there will be four or five DFVs available which will be looked after by Ray Buckley who looked after the engines used by the Hesketh team in 1973. Chief mechanic for the team, which should make its debut at Interlagos in the Brazilian GP, will be Richie Bray who held the same position with Rondel this year and on the F2 McLaren the year before. No sponsorship details are available at the moment.

F1 wing regs confusion?

Just to confirm a recent CSI ruling, one Formula 1 amended regulation which appears to be causing some confusion is the one that states from January 1 1974, nothing above the rear wheels must protrude more than 1 metre behind the centre line of the axle of the rear wheels. Rumours suggest that some teams are going to be armed with their tape measures at Argentina just in case some manufacturers haven't conformed with the new measures.

● The Daytona 24 Hours has been postponed until July to bring it closer to the Watkins Glen 6 Hours, as a result of the fuel crisis. The rest of the Daytona speed week will carry on as normal but under a revised format.

RAC meeting

The RAC Motor Sport Division was the scene of an important meeting a week last Wednesday when the circuit owners met with the British governing body to discuss programmes of motor racing in the 1974 season in the event of the fuel crisis persisting.

It is understood that many possible alternate programmes were discussed. After the meeting, Mr Dean Delamont, Director of the RAC Motor Sport Division, commented, "We are pressing on with our plans and are confident that we will have a viable season of motor sport in 1974. Everyone is working on the statistics to place before the Government as soon as possible and we hope the Government will give them moral blessing or give us some fuel in the event of fuel rationing."

The next meeting on this situation has been called at the RAC for Wednesday, January 9.

Among the many Christmas cards we received this year was this one sent by the RAC which we thought ought to be appreciated by everyone!



"COME ON LADS, ONLY ANOTHER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY THREE PINTS TO GO AND WE'LL HAVE THIS STUFF HOMOLOGATED".

Hailwood will drive YardleyMac

Mike Hailwood will drive for Yardley-McLaren in 1974. This exciting news was confirmed at the end of last week by Yardley who expressed their happiness at being able to see their contract with McLaren through to the end of its current term.

All the differences with McLaren have obviously been sorted out and Yardley will continue to put all their effort and enthusiasm into the team.

Hailwood actually signed for the team a few weeks ago and has presumably asked John Surtees for a release from his contract.

The Yardley-McLaren team in 1974 will consist of two M23 models for Hailwood, both of which will be maintained and run as full works cars. McLaren joint managing director Phil Kerr will be team manager and Hailwood's debut for the team will be at the Argentine GP. As well as doing all the Grands Prix Mike will also take part in the Simoniz Race of Champions and the GKN/Daily Express International Trophy.

The news of Hailwood's signing will be well received everywhere as he is one of the sport's greatest characters and this season he has had some very disappointing outings in the Surtees TS14. Hailwood said of the new contract "I'm very happy to be with Yardley-McLaren and am looking forward to a really competitive year."

BRIEFLY...

- Apologies are due to John Surtees and Carlos Pace. In our story about the new TS16 testing at Kyalami the best time came out as 1 m 26.3 s and of course it should have been 1 m 16.3 s.

- According to the latest CSI amendments to the FIA Year Book, Formula 2 engine regulations will not change until 1977.

- In our F1 review tables we stated that Jackie Stewart used Girling brakes on the Tyrrell last season. He did, but only up to the Spanish GP, from Belgium onwards he was on Lockheeds.

- It has been confirmed that the Triumph Dolomite Sprint has been homologated into Group 1 from January 1, 1973.

- The Grand Prix of Singapore scheduled for April 13-14 has been officially cancelled.

- USAC has been cut off from all its supplies of alcohol and is trying to find 180,000 gallons for the 1974 season.

- The Texas World Speedway has cancelled all its professional events for 1974, including the Texas 500 USAC race.

Homologation hits Capri

The Ford Capri 3100 GT is undergoing quite a strange homologation problem. There was no way in which the car could be homologated into Group 2 by January 1, 1973, and as the next homologation meeting is not until April, the non-acceptance of the car would leave Ford of Germany in a bit of a spot regarding their assault in the first few races of the 1974 European Touring Car Championship.

It was therefore decided that as soon as Ford stated they had built their 1000 models to get it homologated into Group 2, the CSI would be informed and would then carry out an immediate inspection for approval on the first date of the following month. With this procedure, it is thought that the Ford Capri 3100 will be homologated by February 1, 1974, into Group 2.

- There's a change over the CSI's ride height regulations for Groups 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 cars next year which affects in particular the Group 1 production saloon cars. Instead of having to drive over a mass of 90 cm x 90 cm and 10 cm high, in future the regulations state that no part of the car should touch the ground when one of its tyres is deflated.

FF regs changes

Changes have been made to the 1974 Formula Ford regulations regarding bodywork. In future the coachwork, including fuel tanks, shall not exceed a maximum width or height of 70 cm at any point. In the case of a cowl surrounding a side-mounted radiator, the body width can extend to 95 cm for a length of 20 cm. With regards to Formula Ford fire extinguisher regulations an inbuilt fire extinguisher is not mandatory, but nevertheless the car shall carry, mounted in an accessible place, not more than two fire extinguishers of a minimum total capacity of 3 kg (61 lb) of extinguishant. At least half of this fire extinguishing capacity must be in the cockpit.

Apparently the bodywork regulations are causing concern for some manufacturers whose new models contravene the changes and discussions are taking place in trying to postpone this amendment.

- The Lancia Stratos development programme, now being run by Mike Parkes, is progressing well. Last week at Misano a car fitted with a turbocharged Ferrari Dino engine was being tested.

Ford's farewell to Jackie Stewart

London's plush Savoy Hotel rocked with laughter and gaiety last Wednesday night as Jackie Stewart bid 400 of his personal friends a personal "goodbye" at a dinner which glittered with "names" from all branches of the sport and elsewhere. Ford Motor Company was paying the bill, and they equipped everyone with JYS-type corduroy caps and sunglasses, so that Jackie found himself confronted by hundreds of mirror-image Stewarts when he entered the dining salon!

Speeches came thick and fast, beginning before the main course was served, since the guests of honour—Mr and Mrs Princess Anne—had to rush off back home for a thrash organised by her mum. The serious side of the evening was quickly over, and among those who spoke were Stuart Turner, Clement Freud, and an amazing reconstruction of Scottish poet William McGonagall. The latter transpired to be Scots actor John Laurie, reading a pseudo-McGonagall poem which far surpassed in awfulness anything ever composed by the genuine bard and could only have been written by Walter Hayes.

There were presentations galore, the most impressive being Ken Tyrrell's gift to Jackie of Tyrrell-Ford 003, the car recently chronicled in AUTOSPORT. "I can't say it's the sort of thing Helen's always wanted around the house, but I feel it must go to Scotland," he said. "You all know how much I've compared driving racing cars to making love, and I've made love to that car so many times that she must be a

real bitch now."

Ken Tyrrell made it perfectly plain that working with Jackie had not always been easy. "I hated it when he got involved in the politics of racing... but I loved him on the track. Perhaps now we can tell a few of our difficulties, and one of them concerns 003. On the day before the Spanish GP at Barcelona in 1971—before 003 had even won a race—Jackie described it as 'a heap of junk.' From all of us at Elf Team Tyrrell I'm delighted to present him now with that same 'heap of junk'."

Walter Hayes then reminded Ken that the Ford engine in 003 was the property of Ford—and presented it to Jackie—and Jackie went on to talk about the significance of his 26th and 27th GP wins to him personally. Fittingly, he presented the 1973 Monaco GP trophy to Keith Duckworth and the Dutch GP trophy (win number 26) to Walter Hayes.

Other interesting points to emerge from Jackie's speech concerned how close he came to joining Ferrari in 1967, before Tyrrell came up with his deal for a Ford-powered Matra. "I have a lot of admiration for Mr Ferrari and his achievements, but I can't help thinking that this dinner wouldn't have been possible if I had gone there."

He also spoke amusingly of the difficulties in driving a Cologne Capri. "Jochen Mass can drive one of those things faster than me, and the Capri certainly played a large part in making me retire from racing," he quipped.

Showboat attractions

Twenty-three new racing cars are among the 70 exhibits to be shown at the Evening News Showboat to take place between January 5 and 20. Among the models are the new Atlantic and 2-litre sports car March models, the latest Eldens, the new Modus F3 and Super Vee cars, a new Atlantic Royale, new Formula Fords from Lola and Van Diemen and a new Image FF from SFL Cars. Among the other displays are the Ford GT70, the new Capri 3100, the Ford F3L prototype, a B type Connaught, a Vanwall and a new spaceframe special saloon Mini. There are attractions such as discos and a Mexico rolling road competition included in the 16-day exhibition which is open from noon to 8 pm on weekdays and from 10.30 am to 8.30 pm at the weekends. Full preview next week.

Stewart says thank you

We received the following letter from Jackie Stewart this week thanking readers for voting for him in recent sports polls.

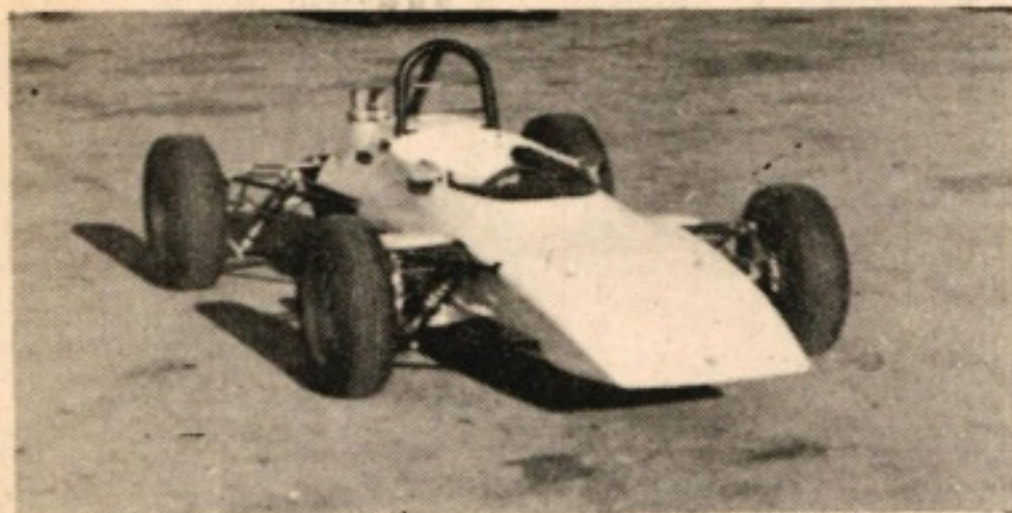
"I would like to thank everyone concerned who, by voting, has assisted me in becoming this year's Daily Express Sportsman of the Year and the BBC Sportsnight Personality of the Year.

"I am extremely proud to have won both these public polls. Motor racing enthusiasts have helped me to do this and I am most grateful.

"All good wishes for Christmas and the New Year" (signed) Jackie Stewart.

- John Clarke, the designer of Frank Williams' Iso-Marlboros last season, recently left the company. He is now operating as a freelance design engineer and can be contacted at Fleet (Hants) 22760.

(Design Formula Wrotham Ltd.)



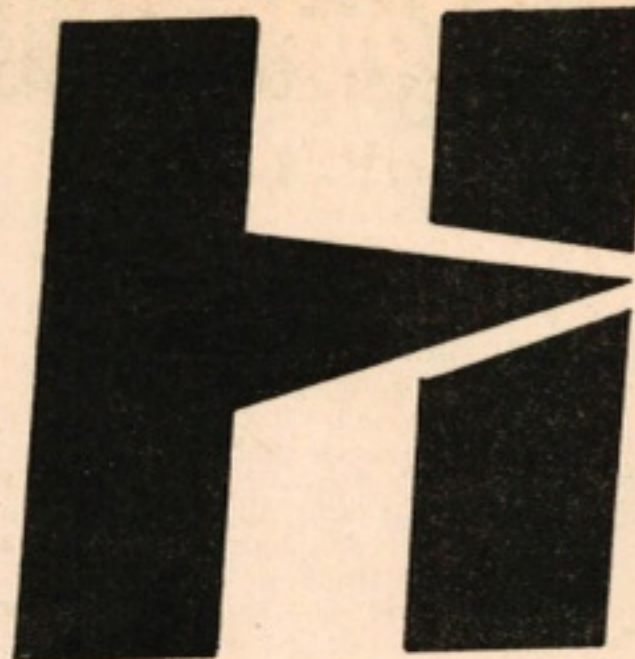
1973 1st, 2nd, 4th BARC Formula Ford Championship
 1st, 2nd German Formula Ford Championship
 2nd, 3rd Austrian Formula Ford Championship
 2nd Dutch Formula Ford Championship
 2nd Canadian Formula Ford Championship

We at Elden would like to congratulate the following drivers, having won races during 1973 with our cars in Europe:

Roger Manning, Ted Wentz, Denny Shattuck, Tiff Needell, Jorge Koechlin Von Stein, Andrew Jeffrey, David Minister, Paul Stanford, Steve Farnworth, Tibor Meray, Arie Luyendyk, Hans Mier, Martin Gramann.

For 1975 we will be offering a Formula Atlantic car to the highest placed Elden owner and a works Elden Formula Ford car to the second highest Elden finisher in the 1974 BOC Championship.

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Wrotham Hill, Wrotham, Kent.
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are pleased to announce that a new Formula Supersport Hustler is scheduled to appear in mid 1974 and it is proposed to manufacture a limited number of replicas for sale to selected customers.

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 Hustler Developments
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What servicing should be

Simoniz MCD special saloons

Simoniz are to sponsor the MCD Special Saloon Car Championship next season. As well as taking in all the MCD circuits there will also be rounds at Silverstone, Thruxton and Mondello. The series will be worth £3,800.

There will be four classes, up to 850 cc, 851-1000 cc, 1001-1300 cc, and over 1300 cc.

There will be £152 per race with double points and money available at the final round. The outright winner will receive £200 and a trophy. The winners of the other classes will receive £72.

The rounds of the championship will be: March 3, Brands Hatch; March 9, Oulton Park; March 24, Snetterton; April 15, Mallory Park; May 5, Brands Hatch; May 27, Oulton Park; June 9, Silverstone; June 16, Mondello; June 30, Brands Hatch; July 27, Oulton Park; July 28, Mallory Park; August 11, Mallory Park; August 26, Snetterton; September 8, Silverstone; September 22, Thruxton; September 29, Mallory Park; October 13, Brands Hatch; October 26, Oulton Park.

BRIEFLY . . .

● Jack Oliver confirmed this week that he will not be driving in Formula 1 next year. He will be working at the Shadow factory and will almost certainly be seen in one of the CanAm cars.

● F1 mechanics changing places: Keith Leighton has become chief mechanic with JPS as Eddie Dennis has taken a factory based job with Lotus.

Pete Kerr, chief mechanic with March since their inception, has moved to Shadow with his old Winkelmann mate Alan Rees.

● Royale Racing Ltd, recently taken over by Alan Cornock, will be based in Bedfordshire as from January 6.

The new address will be Royale Racing Ltd, Royale Works, Unit 70 Little Staughton Airfield, Little Staughton, near Bedford. Tel: Colmworth 509.

Silverstone delay plans

Silverstone circuits were due to hold their usual press conference last Wednesday to announce plans for 1974, however, "in view of the current world situation and the unclear short-term future of motor racing, the directors have decided to postpone the announcement. Although plans are at an advanced stage for a full season of racing at Silverstone in 1974, current and future world and national events could cause significant changes to be made in these plans. In order to avoid unnecessary confusion the directors feel that any announcement of these plans should be postponed until the overall situation regarding motor racing in 1974 has become clearer. In the meantime we are supporting the RAC in their efforts to secure governmental recognition of the importance of motor racing."

Oxton's Star

Australia took the money but New Zealand the points in the penultimate round in the Black and Decker Gold Star championship at the new Manfield circuit on December 9, the day before all racing and rallying, with the exception of the Peter Stuyvesant \$100,000 international races, was banned in New Zealand. Kevin Bartlett (Lola T332) won both heats, but David Oxton (Begg FM5) placed third in each heat and clinched the Gold Star once again. The final round was to have been run at Bay Park, Mount Maunganui, on December 30, but the result would not have affected the issue. Bay Park promoters have, however, decided to contest the Motorsport Association New Zealand's decision to cancel all meetings on the ground that cancellation of their meeting would mean a financial loss that could spell finish as far as the circuit is concerned.

Stuyvesant Tasman Championship entries

All motoring competitions sanctioned by the Motorsport Association New Zealand — except the four Peter Stuyvesant \$100,000 (alias Tasman Championship) meetings — have been suspended because of the fuel crisis. The ban took effect on December 10 and will continue until March 1. This means that the Shell '74 Commonwealth Games Rally as well as 12 national race meetings and scores of club meetings are cancelled.

If it had not been for the fact that organisation for the Stuyvesant series was too far advanced and a number of overseas competitors had shipped their cars the Australasian series would also have been abandoned.

As things stand, however, firm contracts for the eight-race series have been signed by Graham McRae (McRae GM2), Peter Gethin (Chevron B24), Teddy Pilette (Chevron B24), Steve Thompson (Chevron B24), Cal Rayborn (Lola T330), Max Stewart (Lola T332), Warwick Brown (Lola T332), John McCormack (two Ansett Elfins, one with a Repco-Holden V8 and the other with a Repco-Leyland V8), David Oxton (Begg FM5), Graeme Lawrence (car not nominated), Gary Pedersen (Mc-

Laren), Reg Cook (Lola T300), Neil Doyle (Lola T332), Dexter Dunlop (McRae GM1), Frank Radisich (March Repco V8), Robbie Booth (Begg FM4), Allan McCully (Begg FM5), and Keith Laney (Lola T330).

That is the official list, but it may not be 100 per cent correct as Doyle is currently running his new Surtees TS9B and Laney a McLaren M10B.

Notable absentee is former Australian Gold Star champion Frank Match. But it is almost certain he will be in the fields with a car at present under construction which is lighter and smaller than previous Match models but powered, as usual, by a Repco-Holden V8.

The series gets under way at Levin on January 6 and is followed by Pukekohe (the only Saturday meeting) on January 12. Then comes the New Zealand Grand Prix at Wigram, Christchurch, on January 20. The final New Zealand round will be at Teretonga Park, Invercargill, on January 27.

Competitors will be running in the first Australian round at Surfers' Paradise a week later, so the schedule is as tight and hectic as it has been in recent years.

Peter Warr receives the Constructors' Championship award on behalf of Lotus for a record sixth time from Prince Metternich at the recent FIA prize-giving.



CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS. No1... I MUST STOP SAYING NASTY THINGS ABOUT SCRUTINEERS... No2...



I WILL NOT INDULGE IN DRINK OR SEX FOR 24 HOURS BEFORE A RACE. No3... I WILL NOT SAY RUDE THINGS...



...ABOUT 'JIMMY BROWNSTUFF', THE 'SPIDER' OR THE 'SHOWBOAT'. No4... I WILL NOT LAUGH AT ANDY DIAMOND'S...



...NEW CAR. No5... I WILL BE KIND TO LOUIS STANLEY, OLD LADIES, ROBERT FEARNALL AND PIERRE AUMONIER. No6... I WILL STOP MAKING RASH PROMISES!



Ahoy there! Don't miss London's floating motor racing show.

Moored on the river by Tower Bridge is a floating Mecca for all motor racing fans. A treasure ship crammed full of plenty that's new on the fast car scene. Townsend Thoresen's car ferry 'Free Enterprise II' in an exciting new role. Come aboard her by free ferry from Tower Pier.



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10.30 am to 8.30 pm
SATURDAYS & SUNDAYS
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FREE Stickers
from the top
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FREE Cinema!
Shellsport films
showing throughout
each day.

Secret new car!!!
New hush-hush
single seater car with
revolutionary new
type of propulsion.

Wine and dine afloat!
200-seat restaurant
and separate
cafeteria on board
catering for all tastes
and pockets plus
licensed bars.

Dancing
Radio Luxembourg
disco open on
many nights. Tune
in to 208
for details.

20 New models
and hordes of interesting
cars, including F1, F5000,
F2, F3, Historics, F. Atlantic,
F. Super Vee, Can Am,
Karts, racing saloons,
sports cars, dragsters,
funny cars,
midgets!

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Nearest BR stations:
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London Bridge, Cannon
St. and Waterloo.

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in a Mexico!**
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get from 0-100 mph in a
Shellsport Ford Mexico.
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trials open to all visitors.
Each day's winner drives
in a real race at Brands!

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... have a drink,
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the super new
Tower Hotel
nearby.

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Catch up on the latest
engines, accessories,
trips abroad, clothing,
books and magazines,
motor racing posters,
bookings for next year's
racing, Simoniz 'Drivers'
Autograph Area

The man at the top

By ROBERT FEARNALL

As RAC's Director of Motor Sport, Dean Delamont bears a tremendous responsibility covering every possible aspect of the sport. Therefore he and his relatively small staff—for the massive volume of work which they have to handle—are the targets for most abuse which is cast when something appears to be amiss within the sport. Like in many governing bodies, the fault many times has nothing to do with them, but they take the blame. With all the current hysteria of the fuel crisis and its affect within the sport, the RAC have probably suffered their most severe criticism for a long time.

Is it justified? Prior to Mr Heath's latest cut-backs prior to Christmas, I managed to take up a few moments of Mr Delamont's valuable time to talk about the fuel crisis and some other problems which have afflicted the RAC and motor racing in the past few seasons.

How did you arrive at your job at the RAC?
Pure luck. I happened to be with Stanley Barnes during the war and after I was commenting on the second post-war race in Jersey for the BBC I found myself sitting next to Barnes on the plane on the way back. This was the time when he was about to restart the competitions department of the RAC, and said he was looking for staff.

Can you say how many committees you serve on?

Too many basically. I looked at my diary at the beginning of the year and found that I was already committed to 113 committees this year. We have all sorts of committees here at the RAC, and at the FIA I serve on the technical, sporting regulations and safety committees. The sporting regulation committee is the one of which the title is the least self-explanatory—they are the people who deal with everything which isn't technical.

Can you describe the various departments and their duties at the RAC?

We're not really very departmental except for rally authorisation which is separate in theory (but not physically), as it's run by the Government. Apart from that, we really are jack of all trades. As far as main responsibilities are concerned my own job is obviously to keep everything ticking and spend a lot of my time—too much I often think—sitting at committees, playing with politics which get more and more acute every year. It's rather like the TUC, there's so many trade unions in motor sport.

Basil Tye looks after safety which involves all the circuit inspections and this entails visiting every British circuit at least once a year and 40 or 50 speed event courses. Working that out, at an inspection a day, results in a pretty fair task. Chris Belton looks after permits and the sanctioning of events which includes heading the rally authorisations; he's also our front man at regional association meetings. Under him Tony Mitchell deals specifically with rally authorisations and Neil Eason-Gibson looks after the organisation of our events (except the RAC Rally) as well as such items as homologation and the British formulae regulations. Les Needham is responsible for such items as office administration and servicing the technical committees (such as scrutineers and timekeepers).

The RAC has often been criticised for delays in rule-making. What is your feeling on this matter?

It worries me but either one is grumbled at for being autocratic or one has to put up with the delays of democracy. If we are talking about the delays over regulations for the British Group 1 championship, it's just a case of consulting too many people and trying to steer a middle course. The same can be said about the Green Paper which we have been working on for over a year—if you consult a lot of people it's very time consuming. With the Green Paper, it wasn't produced by a rally committee sitting down on two occasions, but was the result of contacts with all the regional associations, many individual clubs and with the BTRDA.

What is the procedure for changing rules?

It depends what kind of rule it is. With regards to the General Competition rules, one needs the approval of the main committee of the RAC while the competitions committee can deal with changes in standing supplement-

tary regulations. The specialist committees (these are formed with experts in the different fields of motor sport), make the recommendations to the competitions committee for these changes.

But most of these things don't emanate from someone's idea at a certain committee meeting. There is usually some background to it with the person at the committee meeting either representing a group or he is bringing forward some thoughts gathered from his own contacts in the sport—you don't find that a group of people just sit round a table and brings things out of the air.

Who appoints the members of the rule-deciding competitions committee?

Basically it's the RAC main committee. It's rather like appointing the cabinet. They are chosen on the basis of their position in the sport and what contribution they could make to a committee's work.

It has been said that a recommendation from the race specialist committee has been overruled by the main committee, thus creating a farcical situation?

I would say it's very rare and it would only happen in the case of something which affects policy. We all get a bit blinkered and if you have your nose too close to the ground, you sometime don't see the overall picture and it may be the competitions committee may send something back for a rethink.

Do you see a time when the specialist committee could make the rules?

I think you would find in the long run that it would be undesirable in the same way that we keep the House of Lords as a debating forum and as a check by the elder statesman. It's very similar in motor sport really.

Can you say the connection between the RAC of Pall Mall and the Motor Sport Division?

It's part of the general RAC organisation and our only difference is that we moved from Pall Mall and were lucky to find this elegant home in the RAC hierarchy at Belgrave Square which the RAC have at a very moderate rental. In fact we might be very fortunate for the Saudi Arabian Embassy is moving next door and perhaps we could organise our own pipeline!

The Motor Sport Division is expected to pay its own way and it manages to do so nowadays although there was a long period when it didn't pay its own way but the development of motor sport has changed this.

It has been recorded that the 1972 year ended with the Motor Sport Division making a £11,000 profit. What happened to it?

Well as things are at the moment it looks as though it's going to keep us going next year because I can't see that next year's income is going to be sufficient to keep the organisation going.

This sum was the result of the fact that there was a boom in sport. We do an annual budget and our basic premise is to break even. It so happened that in 1972 the sport developed quicker than we anticipated—we must be all glad about that and our business is to encourage the sport—and I think again you will find a substantial surplus in 1973, when the sport continued to expand. We weren't able to spend as much money as we would like because of the prices and pay standstill—we were one of those unfortunate organisations which got caught by the pay standstill—and unfortunately the motor sporting world has suffered because of it. We don't live on an island in that we are subject



Dean Delamont: RAC Motor Sport Director.

to ordinary economic considerations too and because of the pay standstill we did find it very difficult to recruit more staff. I know we've been subject to quite a lot of criticism but we would have liked to have spent more money in staff to help the service.

How close a contact do you maintain with the CSI particularly as regards to forming new regulations?

When it comes to technical aspects I'm in the hot seat as I am chairman of the CSI technical committee, but that in fact puts me in an embarrassing position in a way because the chairman shouldn't really be taking a partisan view and sometimes I've found it more difficult to put the British view than if I wasn't chairman.

Did we have a large say in the recent December CSI meeting on the future of Formula 1 and Grand Prix racing with regards to the fuel crisis?

Actually I didn't attend that particular meeting. It was a meeting with the President of the CSI and mainly the Formula 1 Association. It wasn't called in the first place because of the fuel crisis—that was purely fortuitous—it was called to talk about reducing speeds and I believe we all know that the manufacturers and drivers don't want anything done to the cars. They put forward some strong arguments in favour of doing nothing to the cars, but in altering the circuits.

However, the original idea of the meeting changed to the fuel side when it took place and there was a long discussion on what could be done in view of the international complexity of the fuel situation. But no one reached any definite conclusions and nothing has happened since that meeting in that there is no further study on the technical side which means the present formula must go on as it is for another year.

But how do you see the situation as regards to the fuel crisis?

Naturally we could turn motor sport to some other form of fuel, either benzine or methanol, but the major entrants are not very keen to do so if it can be avoided and all we can do is to take action with our Government, which the RAC does intend to do. We shall be approaching the Government hand in hand with the SMMT, circuit owners, etc., and we hope we can agree a programme of motor sport irrespective of the fuel situation. We may have to have an alternative programme of motor sport depending on how the situation works out but we are in fact getting together this action committee of the RAC, SMMT, circuit owners and, I hope, the Association of Competition Car Manufacturers and Formula 1 Association so we can present to the Government a proper reasoned statistical case. I personally believe we will get a very sympathetic ear when it is seen clearly that motor sport is an important industry.

At the moment we are suffering—and I don't think unnaturally—from an emotional attack on the sport. It's rather like the old lady who threatened to strike me over the head with her umbrella at York because we were running the RAC Rally and how disgraceful it was. The problem is caused by a large section of the public who are very emotional about the way they are being

affected and I think we have to let the dust settle down a bit. We all have to get used to the idea that we are not going to be able to motor as liberally as we did in the past and when the dust has settled down people will be more amenable to reason and study the facts and figures which will show that motor sport should carry on.

It is certainly our intention to keep motor sport going as best as we possibly can—obviously we do as it means a severe drop in the RAC Motor Sport's income as much as it affects anyone else's in the sport.

Have you had many meetings with the Minister of Transport Industries?

No. I think it would be unfair to have to worry him about motor sport at this precise moment. I think it's true to say the Government themselves don't know what is going to happen and it will be a month or two before they could feel confident to talk about the future. (For the latest information, see *Pit and Paddock*.)

If motor sport was cut back, do you feel it could be a benefit to the sport in that we have too much motor sport?

It would be interesting and it should decide one way or the other the rights or wrongs of the argument that we have too much motor sport in this country. I'm not casting my vote on either side.

How would you select the events if a cut-back is necessary?

One would have to start with the international events. After all our argument at the present time is that motor sport is an important industry which means that the first choice must be with international events and then work down the line as far as we can go. However if petrol rationing was introduced then people will be free to use their fuel as they want.

Turning away from that depressing subject, do you feel that there is enough co-operation between the various associations?

These various associations are dealing with one particular aspect and it's the RAC's job to see that they do co-operate and amalgamate these various conflicting interests into what is best for the sport. It may be a little smug to say what is best for the sport but everyone never agrees on this—however they always say that if you're right 51 per cent of the time you're a genius and I think that if you look back through the years we haven't done a bad job.

There has been a great deal of criticism on the RAC's running of the British Grand Prix—is it fair?

I think a lot of it is unjustified. We felt that as the national club we should be running the premier race meeting and if we claim to be governors and guiding the sport then we ought to put ourselves on the stage for criticism. We have got to learn in the same way other people learn—by experience.

When it comes to criticism of inexperience, that is unjustified. We try in the Grand Prix to pick the best team that's available in the country. We go to the BARC, BRSCC and BRDC and try to take the pick of their best officials and amalgamate them into what should be the best marshalling team in the whole country. We don't do a 100 per cent job of amalgamating them at times, but it's like leading an army. I always think that the organising of a major motor sporting event is very much like a military operation and I don't think people appreciate quite how much higher the pressures are on the two events we run—the Grand Prix and RAC Rally—than in organising other events in this country.

There have been suggestions of a national marshal-training scheme. What is the RAC's opinion on such a scheme?

I think it would be a wonderful idea. I would like to see, and I've talked about this for some time, an educational trust for the training of motor sporting officials. It would have to be very well financed, if only to train the fire marshals, because that's a very expensive operation and one that worries me very much. I don't say that critically of the people involved who are all first class and dedicated to their job, but to give them the opportunity of really experiencing fire and going through

adequate training. Even the amount of fuel and extinguishant used would amount to thousands of pounds.

So how could it be financed?

I think that we could get money from the Sports Council to start with, whose mandate it is to contribute to such things. Also sponsors, circuits and drivers could contribute. It's one of those things which is a good idea but would take a lot of time and a lot of organisation. It may well be this present pause in motor sport will give the time to give this more attention. It's often said good comes out of evil—the last time we had petrol rationing during the Suez crisis I sat down and wrote the RAC Motor Sport Year Book and that's why we have some standing supplementary regulations!

It is said that the same circuit safety requirements apply to all British circuits yet it's obvious that the safety standards of certain club circuits differ from those which hold international meetings.

Perhaps we are too kind, but obviously they ought to be the same. You must give the spectator as much protection to whatever category of racing you have and you must give similar driver and official protection. In practice it's not always possible because it gets into the field of economics and there is some disparity as a result. Our long-term aim is to have the same standards everywhere and again one must bear economics in mind as it's not our job to go around closing motor race circuits. Our business is to encourage motor racing and to keep it going within a certain overall pattern.

However there is not so much protection offered to the thousands of spectators on the RAC Rally.

It causes us concern about spectators on any rally. I just don't know what we do in this matter. There is a programme going on with the forestry commission to try to get some spectator areas created in some of the more popular forests and I hope it will succeed. Also we don't get enough co-operation from the public themselves and we try to avoid the high-speed stages. One other point to remember is that conditions of a rally differ to those of a race meeting in that the rally driver will drive at six- or seven-tenths compared with the racing man who drives at eight or nine tenths.

Are there any new requirements regarding safety for British circuits in 1974?

Nothing new that's already in the pipeline, which includes the erection of more debris fencing in the major spectator areas.

Following the Zandvoort tragedy, there was much discussion regarding changes in fire fighting methods. What is the current situation?

Well unfortunately the fuel situation is bug-ging us at the moment as we would need 500 to 600 gallons of fuel to do a proper evaluation between the two systems and I'm not quite sure how we are going to get it. We are at the situation where there is an agreed programme of evaluation tests and we are already to go when we can get 600 gallons of fuel to blithely burn. If you do this seriously and have comparable conditions, you have to use good quality fuel otherwise the whole thing is cloaked in unreliability.

I think we are in the situation where we have two bodies of hard-working people who both believe their system is the better one. One may find they are equal or we both need modifications, but I would very much like this to go on as soon as possible.

One of the big problems of safety in sport as a whole is that there has not been the possibility—again for economic reasons—to have scientific analysis of safety questions. We put up Armco barrier, debris fences and really only do so on an empiric basis. Ideally one needs about £1 million and go to a research laboratory with lots of motor cars and lots of safety equipment, and really test them. But we don't—instead we have to work on empiric knowledge gained from accidents. **The situation over circuits and noise seems to be causing great concern. Is there any ruling from the Government over this or is it not a great problem at all?**

I think it's going to be a growing problem and not only confined to this country. It's a growing problem worldwide and I can see a day when the pattern of motor racing will have to be changed internationally. For example the local authorities have already clamped down on the number of meetings at Hockenheim because of noise and one of the states of America has banned motor racing for the same reason. Quite obviously something will have to be done and I think it's most unfair in many ways, as many other activities create equal disturbance.

If I lived next to a race circuit where there was testing going on five or seven days per week I might join the protestants but I believe the odd motor race meeting should be allowed to carry on with a reasonable amount of noise. Maybe we can reduce the noise level to some extent but my own view is that

Formula Ford has suffered from eligibility problems but Mr Delmont expresses hope of more eligibility scrutineers in 1974.



noise is an integral part of the spectacle. It has been said that many homologation specials have been illegally pushed through regarding British manufacturers. What is your opinion and how much are the manufacturers' claims checked?

We at the RAC put forward applications for homologation and we like to feel in good faith that we are making an honest submission. In this respect we don't normally do a check but try to keep our eyes and ears to the ground.

Belgrave Square is a good place to see new cars and if looking out of the window in the evening, I see half a dozen models of a new car going round the square—assuming it's not the same car going round six times—then I would assume a reasonable number had been made and were in the hands of the public. On the basis of keeping our ears to the ground we would put forward an application believing what the manufacturer told us. In fact at this very moment we have told a well-known manufacturer not to put forward an application as we don't believe he has made the number he likes to dream he has.

When the application goes forward, then it's up to the CSI homologation committee to decide whether they will make a check and if they do then they send over a non British team and to the best of their ability they will look in to the production situation. It's very difficult to check the production of a motor car and you wouldn't believe some of the ridiculous things that go on. I get involved because I often have to go and check foreign cars. Sometimes it's easy as when I went to check models from Porsche and Ferrari and there were 25 cars lined up in the factory in both cases and one could simply count them. But it's very difficult to try to check if someone has built 5000 models—you can look at the books, check the print out and the production line or go to the dealers or ring up another country to see how many models have been imported. It's a very difficult problem at which we do our best but I don't guarantee that an "illegal" one has got through.

What is your opinion on the claim that penalties imposed on competitors found cheating the eligibility regulations are not heavy enough, causing such organisations as the BRSCC to take action into their own hands?

I don't think we've been able to exercise as much control over eligibility as we would have liked. It needs a political brand of scrutineering—most scrutineers are safety and not eligibility conscious. But I believe by next year we will have or would have had a better team of eligibility scrutineers. When it comes to penalties imposed, it's rather like the death sentence. If you make the penalty too severe people are very reluctant to apply it. I think that not such a drastic penalty but a more frequently used one is the remedy; perhaps a totting-up procedure.

When some of these people come before tribunals they come along with their tears in their eyes and wonderful excuses—"my mechanic polished the ports when I wasn't looking or my aunty gave me a present of a new cylinder head which I accepted in good faith." I know it may sound funny now but that's the sort of story we have been told.

Do you see a time when the non-professional clubs will stop organising motor racing meetings of anything more than a restricted permit? Probably the time is approaching. If we're talking about motor race meetings where the public are very largely affected, I think the time will come when the number of organisations will be even more restricted. We've already mentioned such items as the training of marshals, ancillary equipment, medical and fire services etc and I can foresee a time when this is all part of a circuit. But then again this means that they are going to become professional. How motor sport survives with a professional band of officials, I really don't know but I believe the whole thing will become uneconomic overnight if you should start paying officials a reasonable rate.

I happen to be a director of the Speedway Control Board and run all their major inter-



Production saloon car racing has often caused homologation problems but the RAC "have their ears and eyes to the ground" in this matter.

national speedway meetings in this country and there you're dealing entirely with a professional staff. A very small one of course—a dozen and a half people—but they are all paid for it and are teams attached to the circuit.

Do you not believe that the once important RAC national Championships have lost a lot of their prestige?

Unfortunately yes—they have been swamped by commercial championships. Maybe we're not quite so good at selling sponsorship as others are as they should be more important, with organised efforts made to find sponsorship. Another problem has been with points in that you would be surprised how tardy some organisers are in sending in their results.

If the RAC consider that a particular formula is doing the sport harm, could they stop it? We would be reluctant to do so and we don't feel it's our business. The analogy I make about the FIA applies here, in that they pro-

vide formulae which are goods in a shop window and it's up to the organiser which goods he buys from that shop window.

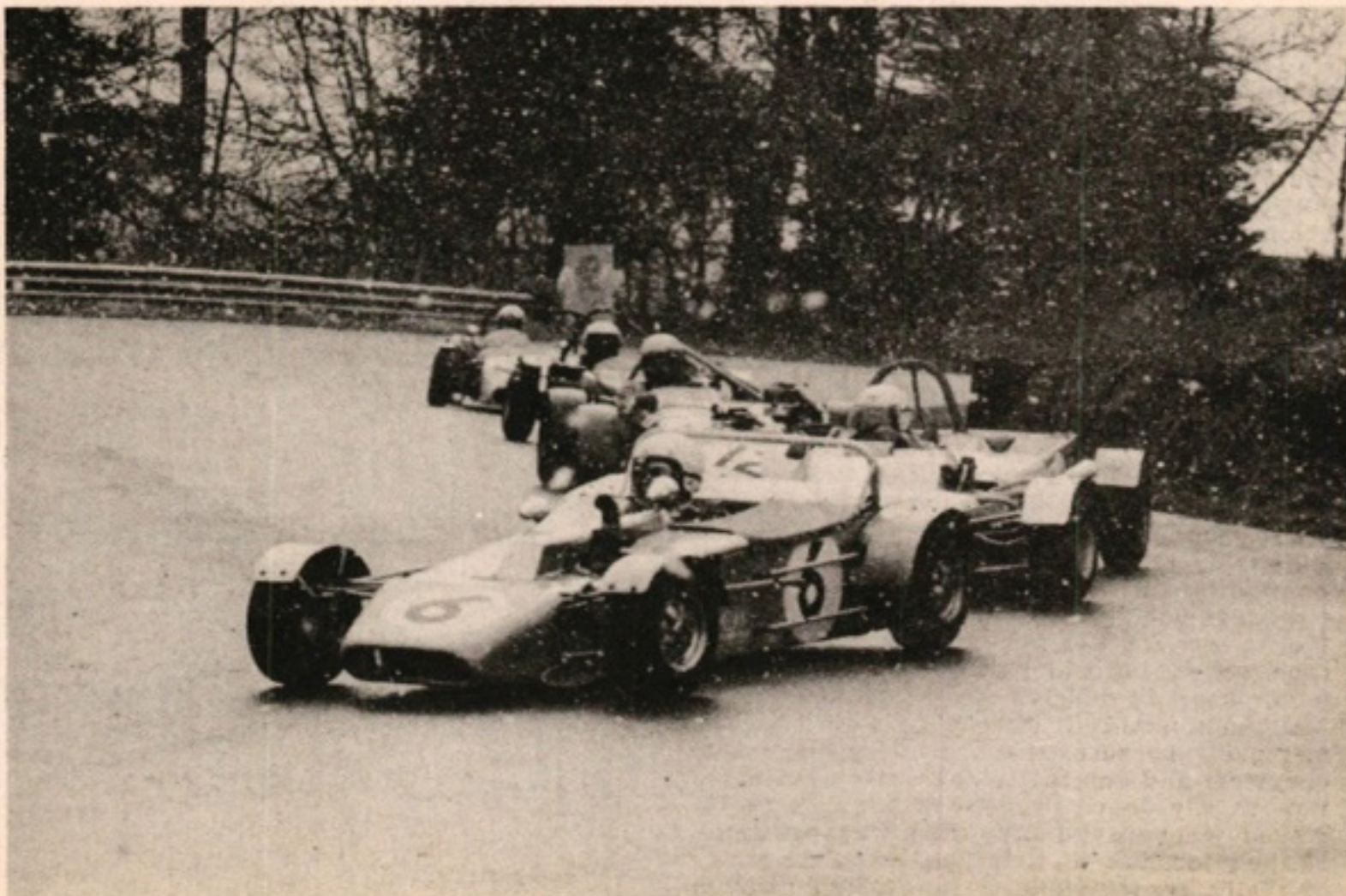
The RAC have been criticised for their poor press and public relations side.

We haven't a press/publicity side as it comes under the press and publicity division of the RAC which is separate to our division.

Regardless of the fuel crisis do you see any radical changes that must be made for the benefit of motor sport generally within the near future?

Radical changes, no. The sport develops all the time in small ways yet it develops very little in basic principles. If you come down to basic problems within the sport, they change in size but they really are very little different from the basic problems when I started, too many years ago to remember. In fact I got slung out of my first event, for not complying with what was alleged to be the spirit of the regulations.

Regarding circuit safety, the RAC's aim is to have the same safety standards everywhere. On this occasion snow hindered competitors on the controversial Cadwell circuit.





The road holding is very safe indeed and entirely predictable this being an easy car to drive fast on winding roads.

MGB improves with V8's increased torque

The MGB has been with us for many years and is typical of traditional British sports cars. In its GT form, it has a practical coupé body with a tailgate for luggage, which greatly widens its appeal. However, the basic design is still of vintage simplicity and refinement is not its strong point.

Now, British Leyland are offering an additional model, with a very refined V8 engine that almost doubles the torque and power output of the usual 1.8-litre 4-cylinder unit. This is the light-alloy engine of the Rover 3500, but modified for the MG installation, particularly in the induction department where the penthouse manifold is replaced by a low-level one, with the carburettors to the rear of the block. This completely avoids an unsightly bulge in the bonnet, which would restrict the driver's view.

The V8 is actually lighter than the four, but USA and other foreign regulations call for anti-pollution and silencing equipment which adds appreciably to the weight and slightly restricts the power output. A larger radiator with two electric fans is used and an oil cooler is also fitted. A bigger clutch handles the torque and the MGC gearbox has been beefed up and furnished with closer ratios. The rear axle has also been strengthened and the ratio has gone from 3.91 to 3.07 to 1. Some stiffening of the springs has also taken place. A Laycock overdrive is fitted as standard.

If one does not notice the V8 motif, the more powerful version of the MGB is indistinguishable from its four-cylinder sister. Even in the driving seat, the only clue is the smaller speedometer and rev-counter dials, necessitated by the collapsible safety steering column.

As soon as the quiet engine is started, however, it is obvious that this is a very different machine.

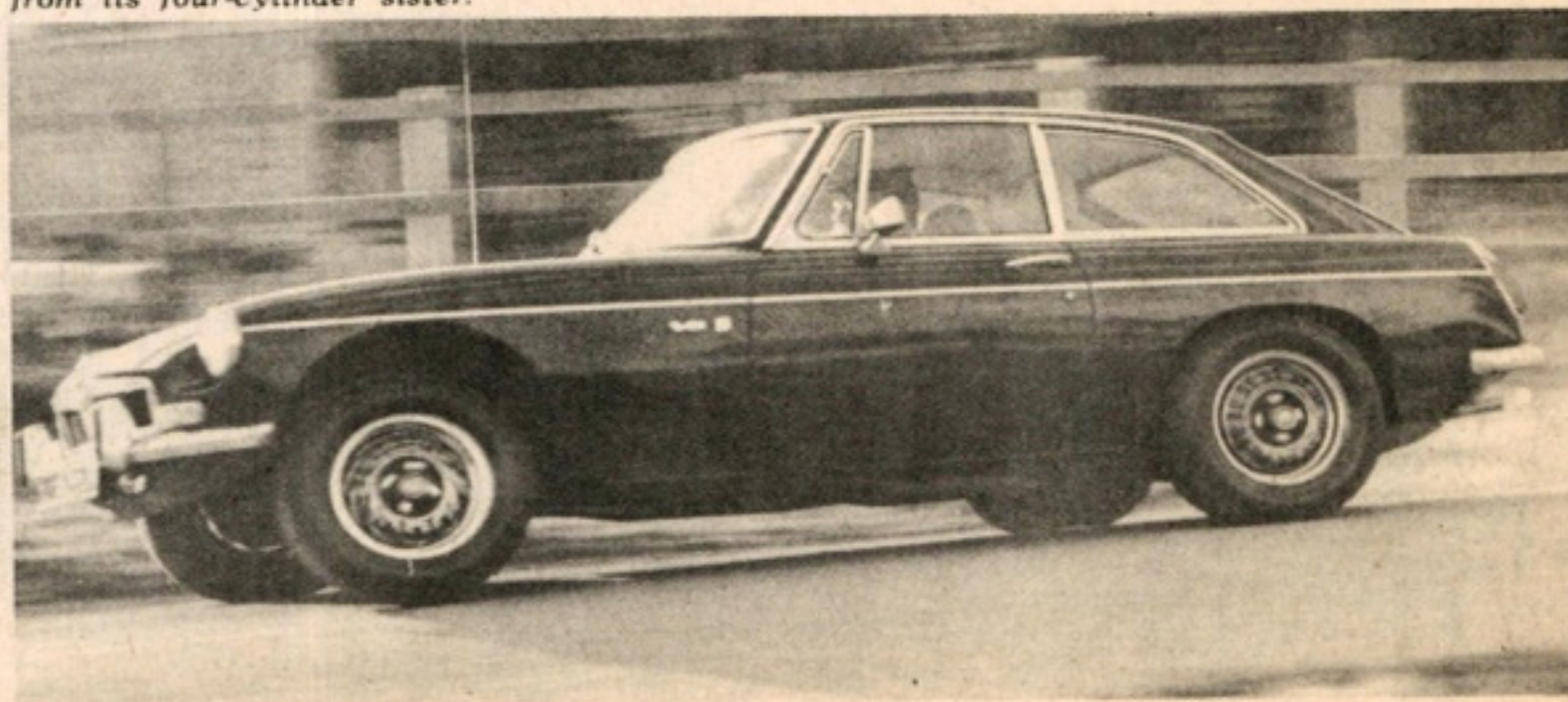
Because the engine is so unobtrusive, the car does not feel as fast as it is. Yet, it has a performance in the upper speed ranges which the 1.8-litre model, rather naturally, cannot approach. About 124 mph is possible in direct top gear, with the rev-counter just going into the red, or the same speed may be achieved on overdrive with the engine well within its range. Overdrive will give an extra 1 mph or so on the level and a bit more under favourable conditions, well below the red part of the dial. The engine is never noisy

but it is even quieter when the overdrive is engaged for high-speed cruising.

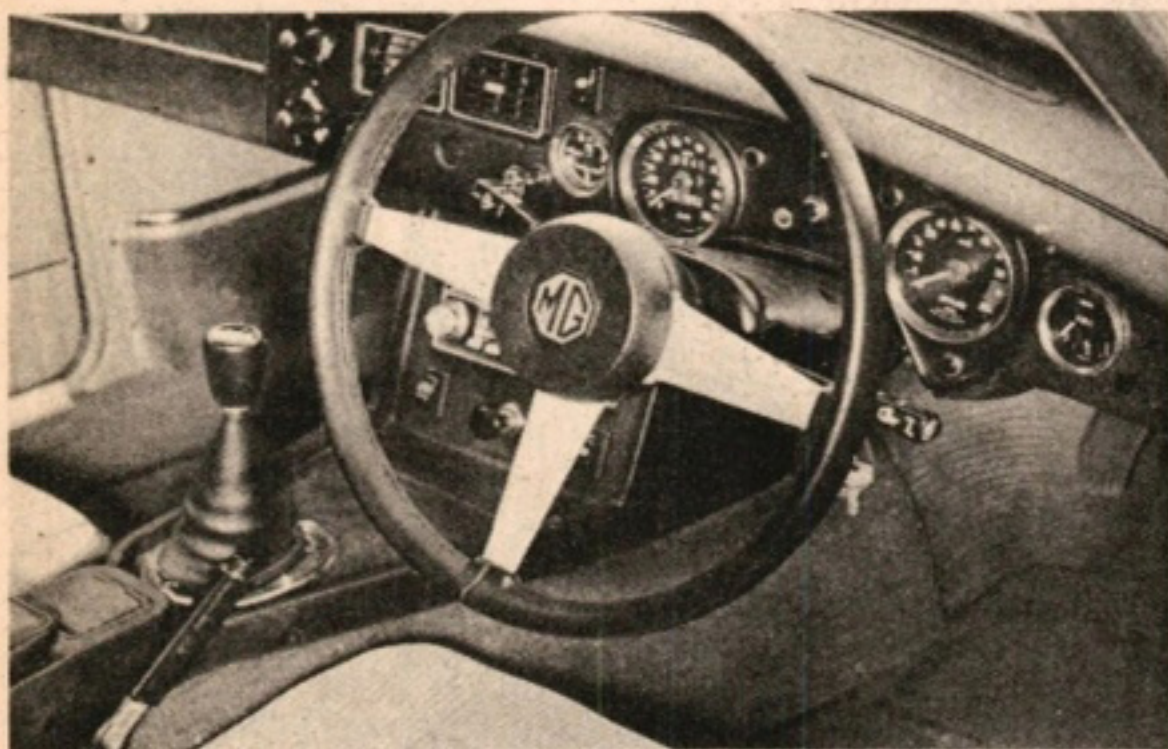
The overdrive also permits fuel economies, which is certainly its greatest virtue nowadays. At a steady 50 mph the car gives 30 mpg in direct drive and 32 mpg in overdrive. At 70 mph, the respective figures are 25.6 and 27.5, while at 100 mph they are 16.9 and 20 mpg. On winding roads and in traffic, the eight-cylinder model may be just about as economical as the four since less gear-changing is required.

Because the engine is so smooth and quiet, the rest of the car perhaps shows up less well. The gearbox is audible when on the indirects and there is road noise on some surfaces. The wind noise is rather obtrusive at high cruising speeds, once again because it is not drowned by engine roar. The former tendency of the windows to bulge under high wind pressure has been overcome, but at the expense of making slamming essential when

If one does not notice the V8 motif, the more powerful version of the MGB is indistinguishable from its four-cylinder sister.



Road test



Left, the only mark distinguishable from its four-cylinder sister is the smaller speedometer and rev-counter dials, necessitated by the collapsible safety steering column. Right, the Rover 3.5-litre V8 surely the most versatile engine that has yet been built.

the doors are closed.

The suspension is definitely hard and the ride choppy, especially at moderate speeds. On the other hand, the roadholding is very safe indeed and entirely predictable, this being an easy car to drive fast on winding roads. There is really no difference in handling between this and the ordinary MGB, except that the tail can come round fairly smartly if one over-accelerates out of a sharp bend. The offside rear wheel spins very easily, due to propshaft torque tending to lift one end of the axle and depress the other, so a limited-slip differential might be a worthwhile extra.

The brakes are powerful with a light pedal action, giving plenty of instant bite for emergency stops. The gearchange, though, tends to be heavy and first gear can be difficult to engage at rest. This effect seems to be more noticeable when the box gets really hot during prolonged traffic driving. While I am being critical, I should mention that the heater is not very powerful and the spoke of the steering wheel can obscure the blue light indicating that the headlights are on main beam.

Quite wide doors make entry easy and the seats are comfortable. Behind the seats is a padded compartment, suitable for a dog or a

baby. The main luggage space is approached by lifting the tailgate, which gives excellent accessibility but not much privacy for one's suitcases. Regarded purely as a 2-seater, the MG can carry enough impedimenta for the most prolonged continental tour.

The bonnet could scarcely be fuller of engine and ancillaries. Nevertheless, the main items which are likely to need attention are quite get-at-able. The electric radiator fans never come into action on the open road, but when they start while the quiet engine is idling they produce a surprisingly loud hum. Though the body shape stems from 1965, it has a pleasantly functional look which has not really dated and the new Dunlop wheels, with ventilated light-alloy centres, enhance its appearance.

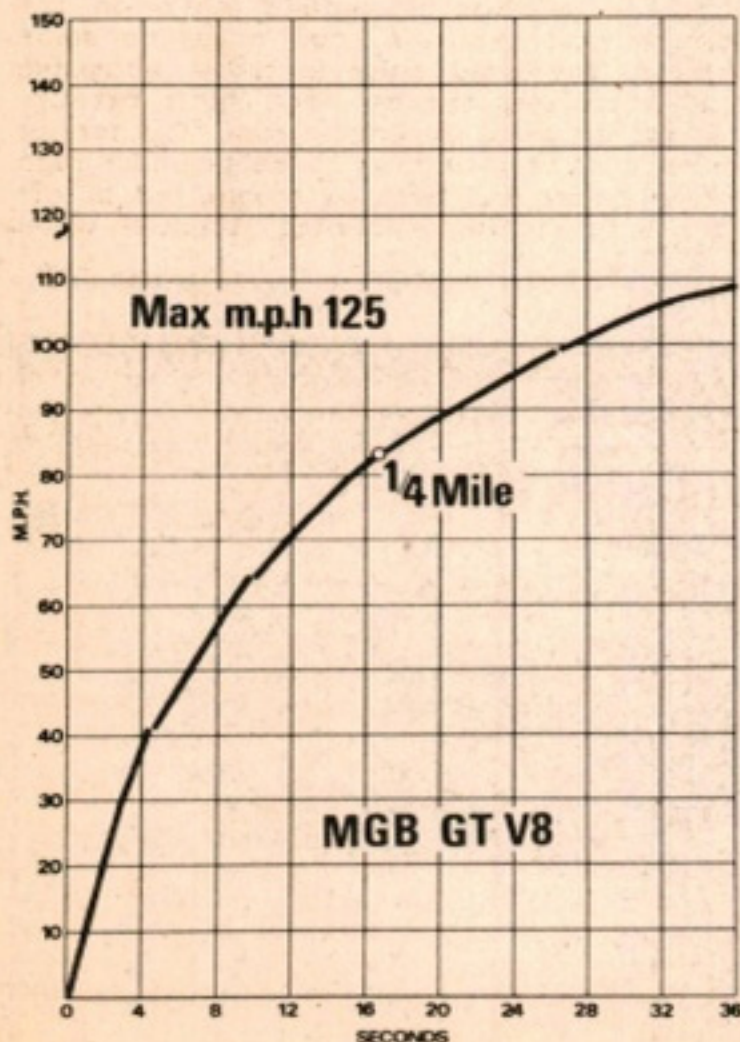
Technically, the MGB GT V8 is perhaps new wine in an old bottle. It gives a harder ride than one would get with the latest suspension systems, but its vintage handling characteristics are beloved of many enthusiasts. It's small enough to be nippy in traffic and it is not burdened with a long bonnet, that curse of the traditional British sports car.

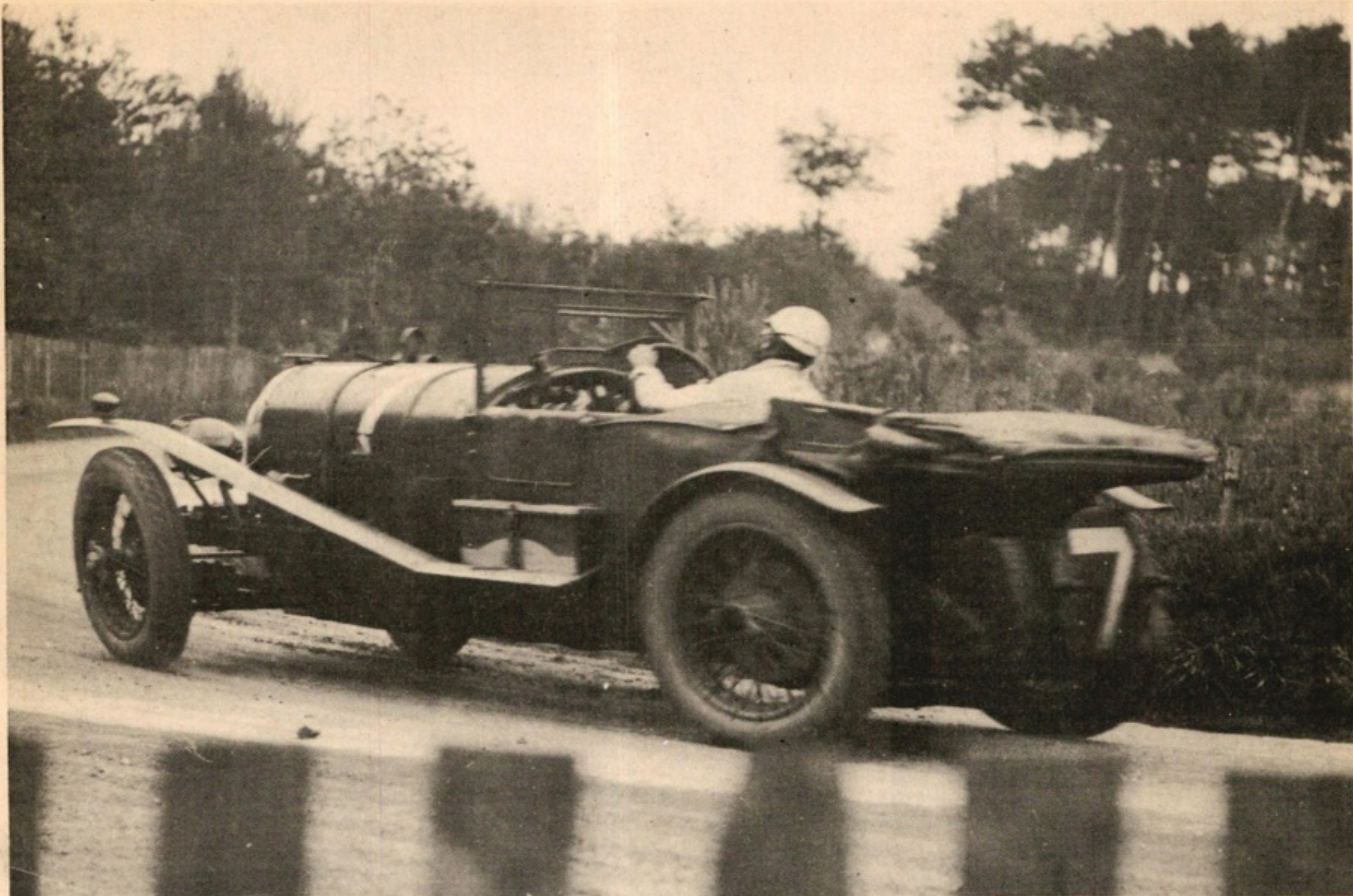
Surely the Rover 3.5-litre V8 is the most versatile engine that has yet been built. It

works marvels in the Range Rover and it turns the staid old MGB into a 125 mph flyer. To substitute a modern piece of light-alloy engineering for an olden tyme cast-iron lump must be progress, and the resulting sports car is no hybrid but an excellent performer with moderate fuel consumption.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA
 Car tested: MGB GT V8 2-door coupé, price £2293.96 including car tax and VAT.
 Engine: Eight-cylinders 88.9 mm x 71.12 mm (3528 cc). Compression ratio 8.25 to 1. 137 bhp (net) at 5000 rpm. Pushrod-operated overhead valves with hydraulic lifters. Twin SU carburetors.
 Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. 4-speed all-synchromesh gearbox with central change and Laycock overdrive, ratios: 0.820, 1.0, 1.259, 1.974, and 3.138 to 1. Hypoid rear axle, ratio: 3.071 to 1.
 Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis. Independent front suspension with wishbones, coil springs, anti-roll bar, and lever-type dampers combined with top links. Rack and pinion steering. Live rear axle on semi-elliptic springs with lever-type dampers. Servo-assisted disc front and drum rear brakes. Bolt-on cast aluminium wheels with chromed steel rims, fitted 175 HR 14 radial ply tyres.
 Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Rev-counter. Oil pressure, water temperature, and fuel gauges. Heating, demisting and ventilation system, with heated rear window. 2-speed windscreen wipers and washers. Flashing direction indicators. Reversing lights. Cigar lighter. Radio (extra).
 Dimensions: Wheelbase 7 ft 7.125 ins. Track (front) 4 ft 1 in (rear) 4 ft 1.25 ins. Overall length 12 ft 10.75 ins. Width 4 ft 11.94 ins. Weight 1 ton 1 cwt.
 Performance: Maximum speed (overdrive) 125 mph, (direct top) 124 mph. Speeds in gears: Third 99 mph, second 64 mph, first 41 mph. Standing quarter-mile 16.5 s. Acceleration: 0-30 mph 3.0 s. 0-50 mph 6.5 s. 0-60 mph 8.3 s. 0-80 mph 15.2 s. 0-100 mph 26.6 s.
 Fuel consumption: 20 to 28 mpg.

The offside rear wheel spins very easily due to propshaft torque tending to lift one end of the axle, and depress the other.





S. C. H. Davis was lying second in the works 3-litre Bentley at Le Mans in 1926 when he ran out of brakes and stuck the car firmly in the sand at Mulsanne in the closing stages of the race. In 1927 he drove the same car again (it was always known as "Old Number 7", the number it carried in '26) and crashed in the melee at White House, but continued to win the race.

Recalling the Bentley days with Sammy Davis

By EOIN YOUNG

As the old man described the scene you could have been sitting there with him in the 3-litre Bentley at Le Mans in 1927 thundering through the night with the world concentrated into the wash of the lights of the road ahead and the split chestnut palings that served in place of Armco barriers in those vintage days. It was coming up to 10 o'clock at night and the three-car Bentley team was comfortably in command as they prepared for their second refueling stop and driver change.

The cars carried numbers 1, 2 and 3, with No 1 being Bentley's big gun—a special long-chassis 3-litre model with the engine extended to just on 4.4-litres. The drivers were Frank Clement and J. D. Callingham and there was nothing to touch it. After two hours Clement had completed 13 laps of the 10.7 mile track, broken his own lap record twice with the hood still up and had covered 140.86 miles beating last year's record by nearly nine minutes. He had lapped the pair of 3-litre works Bentleys then in second and third place with Benjafield ahead of d'Erlanger on the 12th lap, having some difficulty in getting past because neither team driver imagined a challenge from behind nor conceived the prospect of being lapped so soon by the team leader. After about three hours with fuel, oil and water replenished

and the hoods furled, No 1 was driven by Callingham, No 2 by George Duller and No 3 by Sammy Davis.

The race was something of an atonement on several counts as far as Davis, the 40-year-old sports editor of *Autocar* was concerned, because his employers on the magazine had decreed that he should not drive for the same team in the same race more than once in case this should be regarded as prejudice by other teams, something that the august magazine could not countenance. And yet this was the second year in a row that Davis was driving a 3-litre Bentley at Le Mans and it was the same car. In 1926 Sammy had been comfortably in second place when the brakes failed at Mulsanne and he ploughed into a sandbank. It was important that he should regain faith with the old car

(he had crashed it in 1926) and with W. O. Bentley who ruled his team from the pits with an iron hand thinly covered by a velvet glove.

The new "4½" was strong, turning out 118 bhp at 3500 rpm for a top speed just on 100 mph, while the 3-litre models produced 86 bhp at 3500 rpm and were overgeared at 90 mph. These horsepower figures were flash readings taken on the dyno rather than subjecting the big 4-cylinder engines to any prolonged test-bed work. The theory was to save the engines for the 24 hour race so that they would reach peak condition at around half distance.

The Benjafield/Davis Bentley was to be fondly known as Old Number 7 ever after, No 7 being its number in 1926 when it ended the race in the sand. It was bought by Dr Benjafield after that race for his own private use, but was recalled to the works team for each major race. Changes from 1926 spec included a new engine and rear axle.

It had been getting dark as the new drivers set out just after seven and nearly three hours later as they started looking for the signal to the pits, the White House drama unfolded in horrifying rapidity. In those days White House was slightly downhill, a narrow jink between a paling fence that offered scant protection to a white-painted house and farm shed on the left and a bank on the right.

If you could squeeze through there at something like 90 you were right for the pull up past the pits. Callingham was sweeping in with the big "4½" committed for the kink when he saw, much too late, the nose of a Schneider sticking through the flattened fence on the left. He swerved to try and dodge

the French car, but the Bentley got away from him, crashed into the bank on the right and rolled over on its side throwing the driver out relatively unscathed. Seconds later Duller, a top steeplechase rider, needed more than a jockey's reactions to cope with the same situation that had confronted Callingham—with the added complication of Callingham's car blocking any escape. Duller's 3-litre ploughed into the side of the "4½" climbing the bared underside to rear skywards.

Fortune smiled on Sammy Davis, although at that instant it probably didn't seem like it. The Schneider driver had been in trouble before he ever made it as far as the yard of the now-famous White House, and it was white chips from the chestnut palings grazed by the out-of-control Schneider that alerted Davis to the possibility of an accident ahead. It was some sixth sense that perhaps slowed him a few miles an hour but at least alerted him and when he swept round the corner to see the incredible carnage ahead of him he was already off the throttle and dragging on the handbrake. And that is the electrifying instant that he captured for me on canvas, a painting all the more commanding because it has been painted by the subject.

The rest of the accident is history. Davis slewed into the 3-litre striking it a glancing blow and cannoning off into the giant carcass of the "4½", bending the frame, buckling the right front wheel and crushing the mud-guard and headlight. Davis struggled back to the pits and repaired the damage as best he could, wiring a Metropolitan Police-type lantern to the right-hand screen pillar, and after something like an hour he rumbled back into the race to the applause of the crowd and the relief of the Bentley pit.

"The chassis was bent and the brakes came on 1-4-3-2 instead of altogether but you got accustomed to it. It did feel rather strange, though." The bent chassis, the uncertain lights and then rain conspired to slow the pace of the race for Benjafield and Davis but with the dawn they were lying second some distance behind an Aries which was about to start slowing with a problem that eventually retired it and the Bentley was left out front to win by an incredible 212 miles at an average speed of 61.36 mph for the 24-hours despite the crash, the long pitstop and the damage.

Sammy Davis is 86, coming up 87, and he recounts twinkling little vignettes from his career, lacing in trivia as detail embroidery on situations that took place in the Good Old Days. His little studio in Guildford, Surrey, is cluttered with motoring books, and around the wall are paintings of his own. An easel stands in one corner, along with the paraphernalia of a painter at home. There is a rheumatic typewriter at his desk, but these days he does more painting than writing. He has a ready market for his oils.

Sydney Charles Houghton Davis was born on January 9, 1887. He went to school with Malcolm Campbell and in 1903 he enrolled in the Slade Art School in London, but two years was enough to persuade him that he couldn't eat paint and the chance of making a living with paintbrush and pallet were slim. He joined Daimler as an apprentice in 1906 and found himself in the drawing office with F. Gordon Crosby, a man who was to draw and paint his way into motoring history in the pages of *Autocar*. It was Crosby who lured Davis into magazines as an illustrator with *Automobile Engineer* in 1910 by which time he was an avid motorcyclist, motorist, and sometime flyer. He spent the first war in the RNVR armoured car division emerging as a lieutenant, and by 1921 was a member of the AC works team racing at Brooklands.

He remembers the first AC he raced. "They produced that extraordinary machine which was crab-tracked and in no circumstances whatever could you get it to do anything at all, but after all, with your first racing car you don't care about small things like that, do you?"

Fifty years ago Davis was riding mechanic to the famous Louis Zborowski in the French Grand Prix at Lyon driving a Miller. Zborowski was the son of a Polish Count



Sammy Davis, with painting on the easel beside him, describes the scene at White House corner in 1927 to Eoin Young.

who had been killed when his Mercedes crashed during the La Turbie hillclimb in 1903. The throttle and ignition levers were on top of the steering wheel and as he approached a bend he closed the throttle but in leaning forward to turn into the corner his shirt cuff caught the throttle lever and opened it fully causing the crash. His son kept the cuff links his father had been wearing and often showed them to friends, but refused to wear them. He was the man behind the famous aero-engined Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bangs, the giant specials built for Brooklands.

"Lou was a delightful being," Davis remembers. "We stayed at a farmhouse in the country the night before the race and I had to walk him about until three in the morning because he'd got nerves. Said he was going to get killed. He'd driven in GPs before but never in a combined start. This was the first one and nobody believed it would be safe, but in fact it was because with 500 miles of racing ahead everyone was waving the other chap off and it looked as though we would never get going!"

It was a contemporary Indy-type Miller and completely unsuitable for European road racing. There was just enough room for two in the cramped cockpit.

"We got on quite well until the steering came loose and one had to cut a hole in the body to get at the steering adjustment thrust nut. Everything was OK then until about half distance when the car suddenly started veering from side to side and bouncing off the banks and verges. I said 'Lou, what are you doing?' you see, and he said 'It doesn't handle.' I could see that. But then I looked over the side and there was a broken shock absorber dangling on the left front, so I told him to drive quietly to the pits."

Lou wasn't programmed to drive anywhere quietly and at the gruesomely-named Virage de la Morte a right-angle turn at the end of the straight, the Miller smashed through the barricades and back on to the road. At the pits Sammy discovered that most of the studs holding the front springs had sheared off and the front axle was about to come adrift, so the car was retired.

Later that year Zborowski was given a Mercedes works drive and it was at the wheel of a 2-litre straight-8 GP Mercedes at Monza that he met his death when the

car skated on oil and slammed into a tree. For some unfathomable reason he had been tempting providence by wearing his father's La Turbie cuff links for the first—and last—time.

In 1974 Bugatti owners from all over the world will converge on Lyon to commemorate the first appearance of the beautiful Type 35, the car that was later to dominate racing and become probably the most successful competition car ever built.

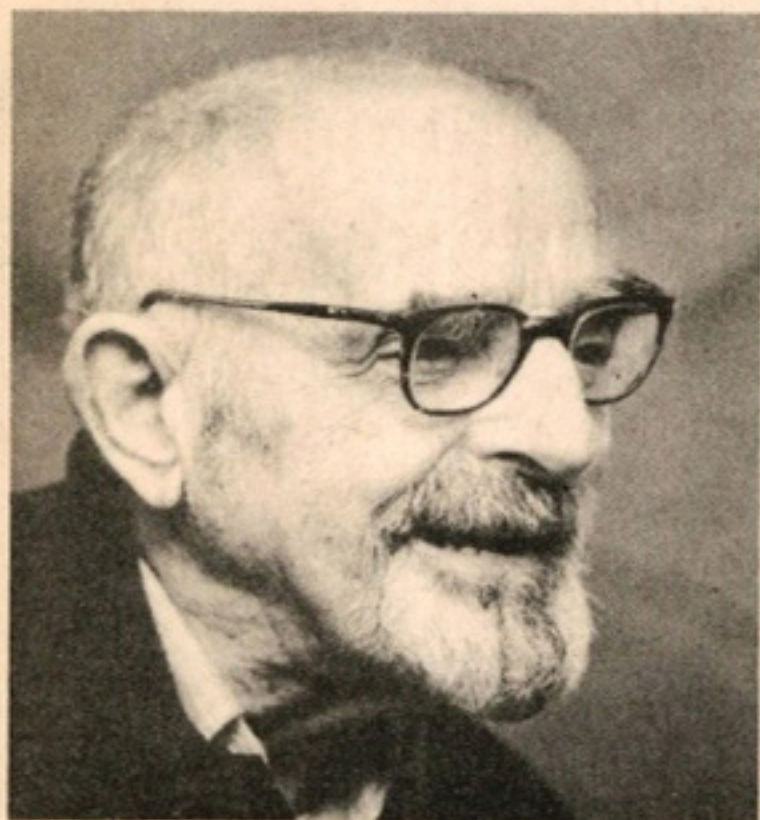
Sammy Davis recalls the Bugatti debut in 1924 with a less than respectful air. "Before the Type 35 they were rough little cars really. These new ones were beautiful. But Bugatti always built racing cars with one thoroughly bad fault in every single one of them. This time he'd got a very bright idea. At half distance we all had to stop and change all four wheels and adjust the brakes so Bugatti had made the brake drums on the second set of wheels a little less in diameter, you see, so that it would take up the brake wear when you changed the wheel and this sounded fine. The trouble was that about quarter distance we came upon Chassagne's Bugatti on the side of the road with him and his mechanic filing the brake shoes because they'd got a puncture and they couldn't get the spare wheel on! It was such a bright idea, too..."

His first road race as a driver was with the Sunbeam works team at Le Mans in 1925. He co-drove with Chassagne and finished second. In 1926 he drove a 3-litre Bentley and was second with 20 minutes to go with fading brakes when he ran out of road at Mulsanne and lost the race in the sand. In 1927 he came back again with Bentley to win. In 1928 he was ninth in an Alvis at Le Mans and raced a Riley in the Tourist Trophy. The following season he raced a Lea Francis, and in 1930 he was a member of the Bentley team again at Le Mans. In 1931 it was an Invicta that carried him into a crash in the rain at Brooklands and put him out of action long enough to write his first, and possibly his best-known book "Motor Racing."

Why did Davis switch cars so frequently? It was his dual role as a racer and a writer having its effect. As a staffman on *Autocar* the management felt that he should not become allied to any one team in case this should be regarded as prejudice by other companies and the instructions handed down

were that he could not drive for the same team two races running—but there was a proviso. "They allowed one thing. If you had trouble while you were well placed, as I'd had with the Bentley brakes in '26, you could run for the team again to please the manufacturer. They never thought it was quite right for me to show favour for one team in particular. . . ."

Davis raced for Singer and Lea Francis in the 1930s and even won a boat race in a Birmal in 1939, but it was as one of the Bentley Boys that he is best remembered. Oddly enough, Sammy hates the tag "Bentley Boys" because of the suggestion it carries that they were all rich young men, three mistresses, drinking champagne with apartments in Park Lane. "It's irritating. You get it over and over again. It was NOT a question of rich people doing something for fun because you couldn't, I mean the whole thing was a planned team running according to the



S. C. H. (Sammy) Davis.

strategy that had been thought out beforehand and the tactics that were possible in situations that arose. We did what we were told and if you didn't you wouldn't be asked to drive again. And that applied from Babe (Barnato) who owned the firm, down to myself."

But while Sammy insists that the Bentley Boys weren't really as rakish as they were painted, you emerge with the sneaking suspicion that perhaps some of them really were but Sammy wasn't. Drivers like Barnato and Birkin surely had their high life away from the track while knuckling down to the job in hand when they were racing. You read of the mechanics referring to their drivers collectively as "playboys" and mechanics are often more perceptive than one might suppose. Was it Sammy giving his all for racing at the track and then concentrating on writing about it afterwards—the man who lived for his racing 24 hours a day and didn't want his picture of it dulled by daily newspapermen suggesting it was all a jolly game with champers and pretty girls?

Davis was back on the Bentley team for the company's last works appearance at Le Mans in 1930. Three works Speed Six models were entered for Barnato/Kidston, Clement/Watney and Davis/Dunfee as well as a team of supercharged 4½-litre Bentleys entered by the Hon Dorothy Paget for Birkin/Chassagne and Benjafield/Ramponi. It was five British cars against a lone works Mercedes, a supercharged 7.1-litre SS driven by Carraciola and Werner. It was the Tommys against the Kaiser all over again. The 6½-litre works Bentleys were developing about 180 bhp, the supercharged 4½-litre cars from the Paget team were giving around 230 bhp under high stress, and the 7,069 cc Mercedes was turning out something like 170 bhp normally aspirated but by cutting in the blower it came up to about 275 bhp, so the stage was

set for quite a race. The key to it all was that the Mercedes drivers were only allowed to use the blower for acceleration, not for all-out top speed. The works cars were reliable if down on power, the Paget cars were up on power and down on reliability and the Mercedes relied in keeping their rationed use of the supercharger a secret.

The race was unravelled at a pre-race get-together organized by the Automobile Club de L'Ouest in the course of which Benjafield kicked Carraciola's wife's dog into the river and Davis discovered the secret of the Mercedes supercharger!

"The club insisted on our having a special lunch with the Mercedes lot and (one never really liked Germans, I'd had enough of them in the '14 war) Rudi Carraciola was there with a very ornamental wife. Now Benjy was inclined to be a little . . . lively, let us say . . . and he tried to get into conversation with her but it didn't work. There was a little stream running through the grounds of the cafe where we had the lunch and she had a little Dachshund which Benjy began edging towards the water with his foot. One knew what was going on and it was so funny to watch him watching everyone else and edging the dog towards the stream with his foot until it finally fell in. Benjy rescued it in a most dramatic manner . . . and spent the rest of the afternoon talking to her!

"During the lunch we found out that the blower on the Mercedes was put in only when you pushed the throttle right forward and it was to be used (and this was most strict) only for acceleration and not top speed. If it was used for more than that, chances were that the engine would pack up so our strategy was to keep him at full speed in such a way that he was tempted to keep his blower in. I had that job and Babe was in support and the third 6½ was kept right back running at a speed at which it was certain to finish.

"You came down the long straight which in those days came from Le Mans city so it was quite fast and going down to Mulsanne corner one ran up to him and sort of tapped on the side of the Bentley in a lazy manner—actually you were having absolute bloody hell getting round the corner with one hand, but the idea was to make him think it was easy for you. Then again you would pull right up to him on the straight almost over-revving to do it, but looking as though it was easy to un-nerve him. And it worked. He kept the blower in and blew up! They were three wonderful hours."

Davis changed with Dunfee during the first

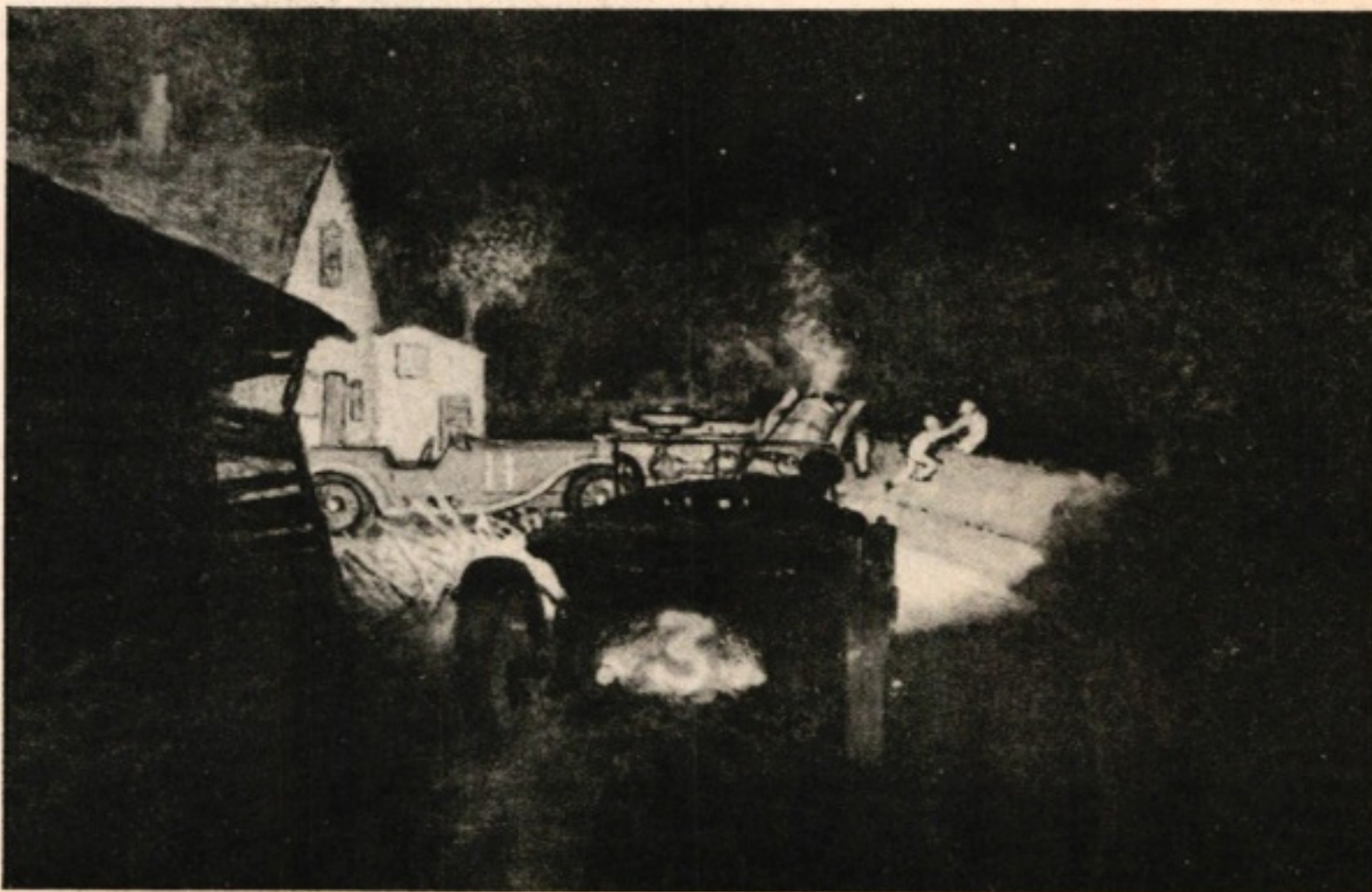
pit stop and on his first lap Dunfee parked the "6½" inextricably in the sand at Pontlieue. Birkin had been the hero of the opening laps jousting with the Mercedes in his blower Bentley, actually passing the white SS on the fourth lap but dropping a wheel in the dirt and flinging the tread off the tyre as he did so. Valour before discretion was always strong in Birkin's book and he continued with the treadless rear tyre and actually set a new lap record until the tyre burst at Arnage on the sixth lap. Barnato then came in with the rigid tactics worked out with W.O., and the two cars traded the lead well into the night until the Mercedes finally failed to re-start after a pit stop just after two in the morning and was wheeled away. The official reason given was dynamo failure and flat batteries. The two works Bentleys finished first and second.

One of the vintage pieces of racecraft employed by Bentley in those vintage days related to pit signals. "We had a big rectangular metal signal with a red and white chequer on the top and black band that was raised to increase speed, level for "steady" or dropped to decrease pace. When it pointed to the nits you stopped. By half distance you knew that your rivals would have cottoned on to this, so after 12 hours in a 24-hour race we would change the signal so that if the hand went down you went faster and if it came up you went slower. It worked every-time, particularly in the race with the Mercedes."

As "Casque" he dominated the racing press scene from the pages of *Autocar* for many years to the point where his reputation as a writer and an artist has almost risen to equal his track record. The little beard, a black beret, and a curved pipe became Davis trademarks and in later years he confined his competition activities to outings with Beelzebub, an 1897 Leon Bollee tri-car (now in the Indianapolis Speedway museum) in Brighton runs. The veteran car always carried a flag on a small standard in front. "It was the Mercantile Marine international signal "D" which, if flown by itself, means "I am manoeuvring with great difficulty. Please give me plenty of room. . . ."

That's the sort of man Sammy Davis was. And still is. It's not often you meet a man who has lived with racing since it started and still retains an active interest, and a memory that spans the century plucking anecdotes from a crowded career. We left him working on an oil painting of Murray Rainey's Monza Alfa Romeo. . . .

Sammy Davis' portrayal of the scene as he remembers it from 1927 in Bentley No. 3 to be confronted by the wreckage of the other team cars at White House.



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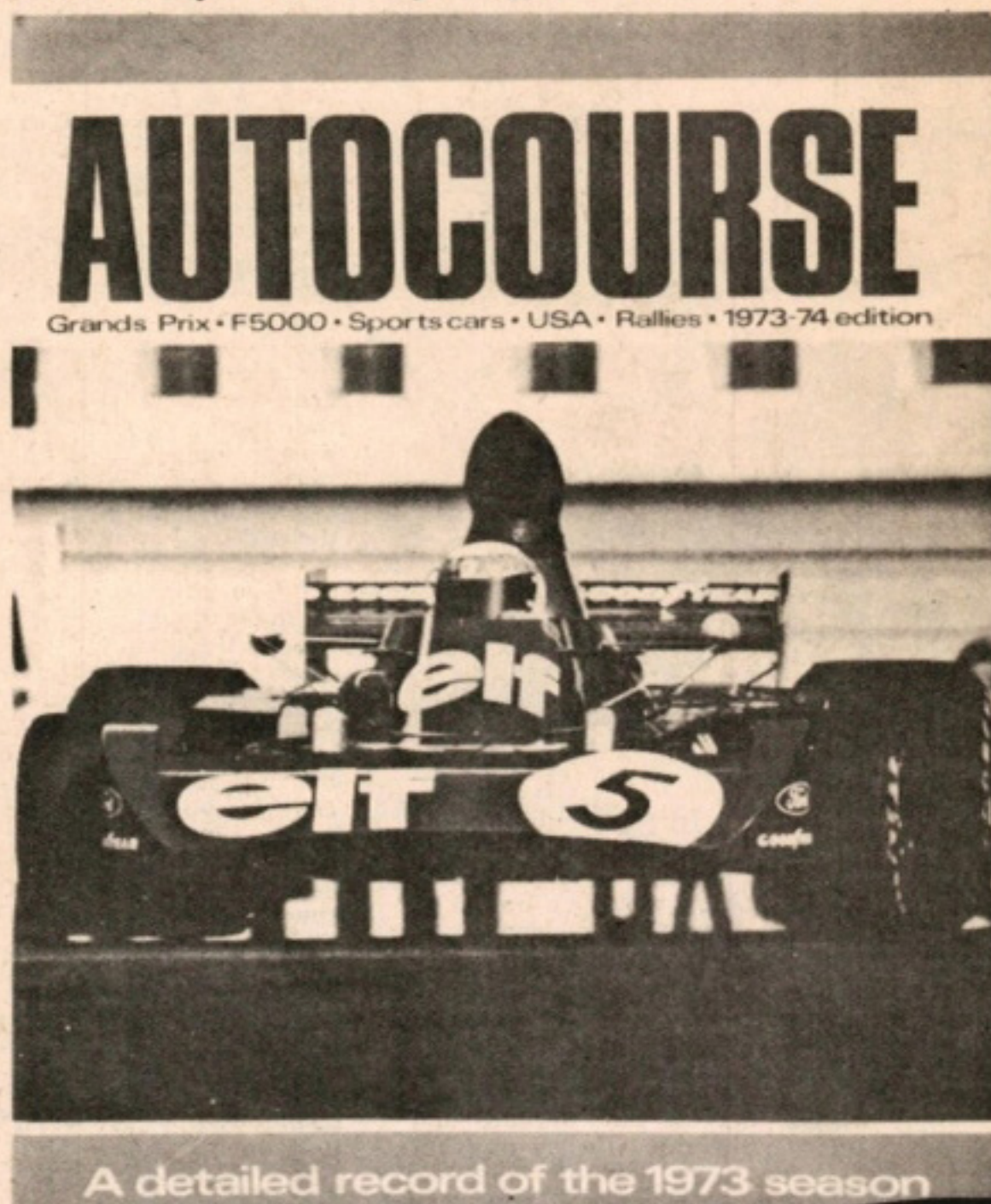
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A future Grand Prix contender from Austria?

HELMUTH KOINIGG

By PAUL THOMPSON

Koinigg at this year's Dobratsch hillclimb with the Bergmann-modified March using an Opel 2-litre engine.

Recently, **AUTOSPORT** carried a profile on Austria's top driver, Niki Lauda, but not so well known is another Austrian whose exploits are marking him as future World Championship material — 25-year-old Viennese Helmuth Koinigg.



Formula Super Vee in Europe is now at the point where it could usurp F3 as the recognised single seater way into F2 and F1. The competition is fierce and the racing close—on the lines of the old 1 litre F3! Koinigg has contested the series since its inception in 1971 and this year took the premier championship, the VW Gold Cup. The less prestigious Castrol GTX Trophy, though not seriously contested by the Austrian—he missed three early rounds—still yielded the runner up spot. The Americans think highly of the Gold Cup and talk of the winner as "World Champion." Big money is available across the Atlantic and in Europe, and with good organisation and expanding interest from constructors and aspirant drivers, the Formula is now firmly established.

Drives for Ford in the works Capri and Zakspeed Escort have left a favourable impression in Köln, whilst Porsche/Martin were impressed enough with Helmuth's driving of the Carrera to offer a contract for all the World Championship of Makes events next year. A works F2 ride with March was turned down as long ago as 1971, but next year a full season will be undertaken with a new car from Kaimann constructor Kurt Bergmann and an Opel engine.

Koinigg's delight in speed goes back to his teens though he has always been involved with sport. Born in Vienna in November 1948, he spent most of his childhood in the Styrian countryside before his parents returned to Wien. By the age of 14, he had tasted success as a national junior champion in gymnastics while building up his considerable skiing abilities. His mother, a former Austrian champion, was a great asset here and for three years, Helmuth enjoyed many successes in the Austrian junior B team. An interest in engines was also kindled around this time and then motor racing started to bite. At 16, he acquired a very old VW Beetle, two years before the legal age limit for driving on the road. The problem now was one of money, for his parents, though quite wealthy, were not at all amused by cars and speed. Tentative approaches for assistance were squashed with a very firm "No!" Thus the car became a mobile test bed for the experimenting Helmuth, and gradually it found its way to small slaloms, sprints and club events, very much in secret of his parents. As Helmuth recalls, "There was always a money problem. I had to win races, as there was no money for gas back."

At 17, he left school and racing dropped into the background when he went to Sweden for four months. Making pictures for shirt and jumper advertising proved less lucrative than he had hoped, so he took a job as a steward on a night club ship. Swedish was added to his fluency in English and French and he returned to Austria with an increased appreciation of the fairer sex and a pocketful of money. Though the Beetle was occasionally used for "competition," university entrance was more important. Helmuth is still studying whilst racing and hopes to have his Doctorate in Philosophy from Wien University next year. Not content with one course, he also studies engineering at the technical university where he should finish his Diploma in 1975.

Thus, it was not until 1969 that the racing bug became really serious. At that time, Niki Lauda's '68 Cooper S was hot property and Helmuth scraped enough schillings together to become its sixth owner. Success followed immediately. Four out of five circuit races were won including a third overall, first in class at a big Group 2 event at Aspern. By June, another four wins in international hillclimbs, including two overall, had brought the name Koinigg to one Helmut Marko, who at that time was involved in the McNamara projects. Marko invited the 20 year old Koinigg to test the McNamara F Vee at Hockenheim. It was Helmut's first time in a single seater and he quickly logged up a time just 1.2s slower than the Doctor before disappearing off the track! Marko was not put off however, and his race debut followed soon after on the Sudschleife of the 'Ring. It was not an awe-inspiring debut—the enthusi-

astic Koinigg came to rest upside down in a tree and in true comic style, undid his seat belt to drop to the ground and contemplate what this racing business was really all about!

At the Österreichring, however, in his first European championship race, things went much more smoothly and he led the race from Marko, until two laps from the end when the fuel ran out. The daunting prospect of the Nordschleife followed, but after setting fastest practice time, he totalled the car in the next session. More prangs followed in what he describes as a "crazy season"—six in all, though a few minor races and hill-climbs were won as compensation.

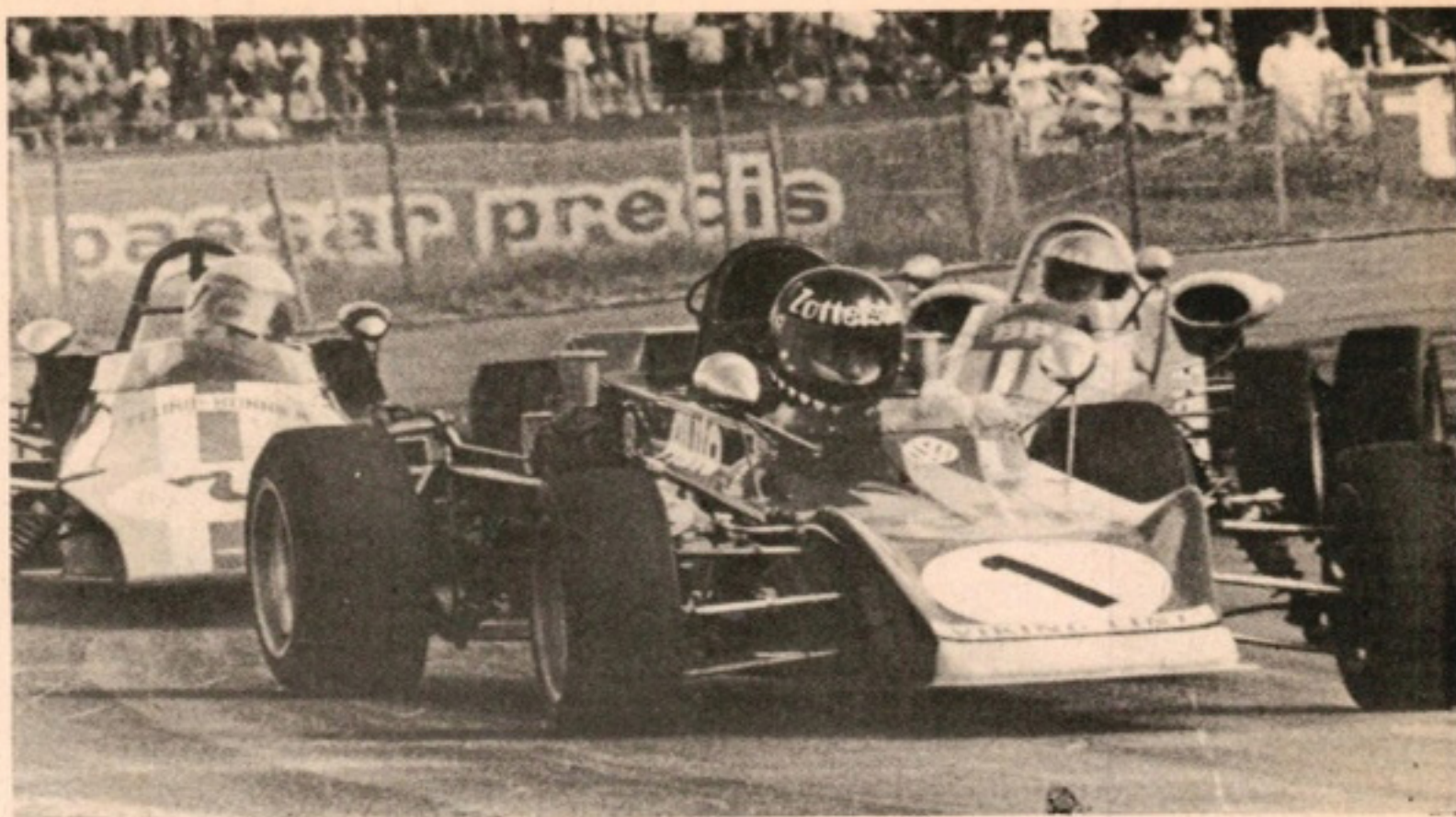
With the thought that he had blown his chance, he was sceptical of the 1970 season. But McNamara and Marko were not unduly worried and he was promised F3 and F Ford in addition to Vee. Things were looking better, but it was a lean time. He stayed on the track more often, and scooped up a few European Vee wins, but the F Ford only got to the testing stage whilst the F3 ride never materialised after the outfit wound up in mid-season. The saving grace came towards the end of the year when he took one of the new Bergmann Austro-Kaimann Super Vees to second at the Ashkelon race in Israel.

It was the start of a new association which continues today, for Bergmann invited Koinigg to drive the Kaimann in the new European Super Vee series, whilst Helmuth had drummed up a sponsor to do some F Ford with a Lotus 69, on condition that he repaid the money. It was a frustrating year. Whilst leading the Gold Cup in seven races, he retired seven times! Two events were won though and Helmuth reflects "There were no crashes which was good for my image." Only four F Ford events were taken in however. Having taken delivery of his new 69 from Hethel, Helmuth went along to the race supporting the Race of Champions. As you may recall, one Jody Scheckter hit the headlines in that one, whilst Koinigg came home an ill handling fourth. At Ricard, the handling was still the big headache, but once this was sorted out, he went to Nivelles, landed pole position and won his heat before retiring in the second when a spark plug broke. The last race that year was the Euro Final supporting the ill fated victory race at Brands. Nevertheless, his ensuing win in front of people who mattered, added further to his image as a good up and coming prospect.

The chance of an F2 works ride with March alongside Peterson was reluctantly turned down when, "I could not bring any money." The seat went to Lauda and Helmuth returned to Austria to do another season in Super Vee for Bergmann. The formula was really blossoming, but just two drivers mattered—Koinigg and Manfred Schurti. The title went to the Liechtenstein driver by just one point with seven wins to Helmuth's six, whilst the GTX Trophy was narrowly lost by two points. Drives in other formulae were few, but team managers had not forgotten the young Austrian and in October, along with 59 other drivers, he went along to Zolder to test a works Capri. His abilities were confirmed when he turned out to be the only one not to over rev the engine and ended up second quickest.

For 1973, he stayed with Bergmann for the third year in Super Vee as works driver, whilst all the other drivers in the Bosch Racing Team entourage pay for their rides one way or another. Bergmann had also modified a March 722 to accept an Opel 2-litre engine, with the intention of doing a few F2 races, with his protégé. A few drives with Ford and later a couple in the Martini Carrera would see quite a busy and important year. The main goal though was the Gold Cup and despite mechanical gremlins and tyre trouble in a few races, the series was wrapped up with four firsts, a second, third, fourth, and sixth. The less prestigious GTX Trophy was not contested seriously, but races were entered when there was not a clash resulting in a good second place with another three wins a second and a third.

The F2 programme was abandoned, due to lack of development time and instead, the



Koinigg is well known for his excellent Super Vee successes, seen here at Karlskoga leading Gunnar Nilsson and Mika Arpiainen.

car was taken to the hills, where the Austrian Championship was sewn up. In Group 2 the Capri was having its year of trouble. The Salzburg race was snowed off, but at Le Mans, Helmuth was lying first in class before co-driver Vinatier over-revved the engine and Birrell took over, coming home with a broken valve. At Spa, it was the Capri problem of a broken cylinder head. The couple of outings in the Zakspeed Escort bore more fruit. At the Nürburgring 6 Hours, with Werner Schommers, Koinigg was leading his class by the proverbial mile establishing a new 2-litre record, before the rear suspension failed shortly after Schommers took over. But at a German national race at Diepholz, in the pouring rain, he did not put a foot wrong, lapping all but second placed man Menzel (that by a mere 300 metres) on his way to victory. The venture into sports cars produced a third at the Le Mans 4 Hours with Schurti and a ninth at the Österreichring 1000 Kms, with the Martini Carrera.

The offers have been coming in through the year, for this affable young man, whose aim is to reach F1. The chance of an F2 and Group

2 ride backed by Ford has not materialised, though if a third works Capri is run next year, we may see Helmuth at the wheel on occasions. Super Vee is now a thing of the past though a few lucrative events will be undertaken in the States early next year—Daytona for sure—where the Americans expect to see the "World Champion" battling it out with their own Super Vee champ. As mentioned at the beginning of this article, Martini have signed the Austrian for all the World Championship sports car races in a new Carrera but the test will be in Formula 2. Helmuth has decided to remain with Bergmann who has a new chassis on the stocks to be propelled by the Opel engine. It's a big gamble for the partnership, but much has been learnt this year from the hillclimb car and with aces like Alfred Apfelbeck breathing on the motor, Koinigg's driving and Bergmann's chassis talent, there is no reason to think that they should not be reasonably successful. Experience, or lack of, could be the problem, but don't be surprised to see Koinigg in an all Austrian F1 team within two to three years alongside Niki Lauda!

Koinigg in the Zakspeed Escort at the 'Ring 6 Hours.





Alpines at the Acropolis—an unbeatable car during the 1973 International season.

1973 RALLY REVIEW

Alpine supremacy in 1973 the unbeatable rally car

By JOHN DAVENPORT

On page 25, Ian Sadler reviews the RAC Rally Championship. The BTRDA Gold Star Championship is reviewed by Mike Broad on page 29.

A good solid vintage is 1973: little to excite the palate but a full body with little deception. As usual the French chateaux excelled with several exceptional individual results and an overall superiority at the close of the season. The Italians lacked bouquet but were able to call on a much wider selection while the German production showed promise that might mature well for future years. The British were disappointing with only Chateau Makinen VP—a combined Finnish/British product—proving at all drinkable.

Thus it might be that one whose palate was equally developed as his taste for rallying might have summed up the 1973 season of World Championship rallies. The undisputed champions, despite a still disputed Austrian Alpine result which will be settled some time in January, were Renault Alpine whose fortunes throughout the year seemed impervious to the normal changes of fate. Nearly always they fielded a three-car team of their stalwarts, Darniche, Therier and Nicolas, and one always hung on to the end and invariably won. It was a classic victory for a marque with the drivers initially unleashed without question of just who was going to win and then at the half-way, a decision made as to whom was going to be the ultimate winner.

One can only do things like this if you have a car which is definitely superior to its competitors and this the Renault Alpine 1800 most certainly was. With all weight kept to the minimum by a minute size executed in fibreglass and 175 bhp of Renault 16 engine enlarged to 1800 pushing it along, the Alpine is the perfect rally weapon. It can probably out-brake and out-corner most other rally cars and it is only a Porsche, a BMW or an Escort that can see it off in a straight line. And when it is accelerating, especially on loose surfaces, it wastes no time at all with its rear engine layout. This was most clearly demonstrated on the San Remo Rally with its narrow, sinuous roads which climb constantly up and down mountains using more than the average amount of hairpins. Here, Therier set fastest time on the first test by almost 40 seconds and from that point onward he could start easing up and looking for the victory. If at any time, Verini in the Fiat or Ballestrieri in the Lancia looked like coming too close, he had only to put his foot down for a couple of tests and he had opened out a comfortable lead again. It is not to say that all Renault Alpine victories were so easily obtained, but the car was the most competitive vehicle appearing in rallies throughout the year.

Its rivals know that the Renault Alpine is virtually unbeatable in mountainous country so that it comes as no surprise to learn that it might have won the Monte Carlo, the TAP Rally, the Acropolis Rally or the Tour de Corse, but much more of a surprise was to see it win so convincingly in a rally like Morocco. It is true that the early stages of that rally are pure speed tests in the mountains bordering the Mediterranean but the meat of the rally is held in the blistering heat of the desert where there are some twisty mountainous roads but most of it is diabolically rough and comprises climbing in and out of dry (sometimes) river beds. In these dusty conditions, the Alpine seemed to be able to stand the worst sort of punishment and though Therier fell foul of a broken front suspension in the first desert stage, Darniche kept up the pressure to come through to a fine win. It may be argued that the generous time available for service meant that the excellent service provided by the Alpine mechanics was able to keep a full preventative maintenance in force, but the fact remains that Darniche went through with no problems on the special stages, individual ones which were well over five hours long. Where the Alpine scored was in its light all-up weight which thus puts much less stress on suspension parts such as shock absorber mounts. This is a lesson which all manufacturers must learn for the rougher events. On the Moroccan Rally, Peugeot caught a nasty cold with their shock absorbers and lost nearly their whole vast equipe with this problem with only Makinen and Mikkola having transmission trouble as well. Fiat entered two Spyder 124 Abarths which went well on the early tarmac stages but suffered from lack of suspension movement once they got to the desert. Triumphant as always were the Citroen team whose heavy, but softly suspended, masterpieces followed the winning Alpine home. Neyret was second overall with a Group 2 DS 23 while third overall was Bochnicek in a Group 1 version of the same car!

Where the Alpine was not really at home was on the flatter, faster rallies of northern



The sixth place Citroën of Bochnicek and Kernmayer on the Acropolis Rally.

Europe. They went to the Swedish Rally where they had the clever idea of putting Therier in an Alpine on 15 in steel Renault R8 wheels because the rally organisers had forbidden the use of studs and on the big wheels with little rims they could fit the same sort of motorcycle tyres that everyone else was trying to use. Therier produced what may well have been the performance of his life to finish third behind the two winning Saabs but all the same, even he had to admit the clear superiority of front wheel drive when going fast with no grip. Indeed, the Saabs were both handicapped for Per Eklund was not able to start with his regular co-driver due to illness and had to take one of the Saab mechanics along instead, while Stig Blomqvist made a rare error quite early in the rally and went off the road so that for most of the rally he was trying to catch back time on Eklund. All the same, Blomqvist won with Eklund second and their only real problems had not been the Alpine but the two Lancias of Ove Andersson and Harry Kallstrom until the former left the road and the latter rolled and lost his windscreen. It was a crazy experiment to try to run a rally on snow and ice without using studs—one stage was on a frozen lake where conditions were so slippery that a push was needed off the start line—and it is only to the credit of the Swedes that they managed it with any degree of success. It is nice to be able to report that for 1974 they plan to go back to studded tyres if only a limited number per tyre.

In a similar fashion, the RAC Rally was not quite the Renault Alpine cup of tea. They lost Therier out of their two-car team quite early on with a minor electrical fault and that left Jean-Pierre Nicolas to fly the tricolour on his own. It wasn't so many years ago that he nearly won the RAC Rally until his Alpine caught fire in Wales and nearly incinerated him, but lack of practice on unseen special stages and a full concentration on rallies where a lot of practice is allowed, left him without any edge in this rally. The running was all between Ford's Timo Makinen and BMW's Bjorn Waldegaard both at the wheel

of 16-valve, four-cylinder, front-engined, rear-wheel-drive cars. The BMW had some brake problems the first night in Wales which dropped him down a couple of minutes behind the leading Escort and despite his most valiant efforts, he could not effectively close the gap. The BMW has the problem that in rally trim, the 2002 still uses drum brakes at the rear and these got a bit too hot as they are set up to bite first when the pedal is applied. Nearly all rally drivers want this rear-biased brake system for fast driving on unseen dirt roads, but it plays havoc with brake drums designed to provide much less of the total braking effort. The Datsun team had a similar problem where they had fitted a separate servo to get more brakes on the rear of the car only to find that the rear drums of the 240 Z practically melted after a few miles of stage driving. Towards the end

of the rally, Waldegaard had a very spectacular exit from the road and was lucky to get back on again and finish eighth which let last year's winner, Roger Clark, up into second spot after a consistent drive plagued by the effects of flu, but the most sensational rise was that of the young Finn, Markku Alen, who had left the road on the fourth stage and dropped to 177th overall and had now climbed back up to third to make it an Escort 1-2-3. In fourth place was another sensation, the diminutive Per-Inge Waldfridsson from Sweden who in a very ordinary-looking Volvo 142 S had provided the crowds with some heart-in-the-mouth motoring. He went through several gearboxes but never had any serious delays on stages and finished a well-deserved fourth ahead of Nicolas' Alpine.

Renault Alpine only completely opted out of three events in the World Championship.

Eklund flying on the RAC—not Saab's luckiest rally.





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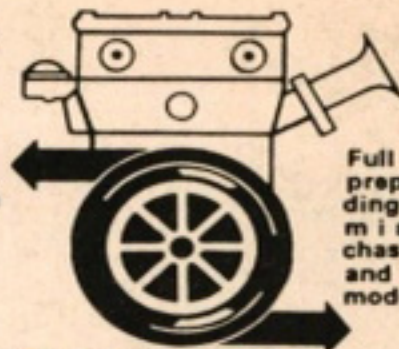
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Gunther Janger high-flying on the TAP Rally with the Annessi-sponsored 190 bhp Opel Ascona.

These were the East African Safari, the 1000 Lakes and the Press on Regardless. The African and American events were ruled out on a question of cost balanced against likely return and Alpine felt, quite rightly, that they could pick up sufficient points on the European events to which their cars were ideally suited, rather than spend vast sums on going to compete in events which were strange to

them. The 1000 Lakes was another event that Alpine gave a miss; perhaps it came in the middle of the French holiday period but in any case it is doubtful if their cars would have been suited to it. The last time a competitive Alpine was tried on Finland's special variety of "flying" roads by Jorma Lusenius, he opted to drive a Renault R8 in the rally which must prove something. Certainly the

1000 Lakes is not entirely suited to light, tail-heavy cars and this year's rally proved to be no exception. The cars which dominated the thing were the Saabs with Blomqvist making most of the running hotly pursued by Makinen's Escort after the other Saab drivers ran into a variety of mechanical problems. Most unfortunate was local man Tapio Rainio, who had to change a wheel on a stage and

The Hannu Mikkola/John Davenport Escort negotiating a rough boulder strewn section of the Safari in the Ngong Hills.





"Safety Devices saved my life," says Barry Lee.

(The roll over bar was supplied by Ford AVO.)

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Barry was talking about the RAC Rally. Unless he'd had a proper roll-over bar, he wouldn't have survived the shunt. He, like more and

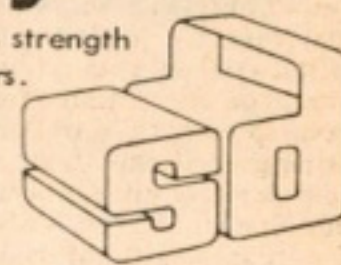
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The spectacular Alcide Paganelli Fiat 124 Abarth Spyder on the TAP Rally in March.

this dropped him right out of contention. Simo Lampinen lost his free-wheel device and subsequently rolled off the road though he pulled the three minute deficit back to lie fourth at the finish and best Saab, for Eklund broke a record number of drive shafts before retiring on the last stage while Blomqvist blew the engine staying ahead of Makinen. The Escort driver had been having something of a tussle with Markku Alen in a Volvo 142, but a broken distributor kept him back in second place while third went to a real flyer in the form of Leo Kinnunen driving an ex-works Porsche Carrera with which he got in the groove on the last day to record many fastest times and pass Lampinen. You can tell by the names that it was a Finnish benefit with just a few select Swedes getting their names on the leader board, but the surprise of the event was the eighth place of Achim Warmbold driving a works Fiat 124 Spyder Abarth with which he had won in Poland a few weeks before.

The East African Safari turned out to be something of a rally of attrition with the principal hopes of the Ford and Datsun teams plastering themselves into various kinds of retirement leaving local hero, Shekhar Mehta, to come through and win in his works 240 Z though any resemblance between the winning car and a Datsun 240 Z was purely coincidental as it had lost most of its lights and one wing getting to the finish. In fact, this damage led to a most unusual situation for Mehta had finished one minute ahead of Harry Kallstrom in another works Datsun, this one a 180 B, but when he got a minute's penalty for the missing lights, he and Kallstrom had dead-heated and the overall result had to be decided on the time-honoured basis of "furthest cleanest" which, not surprisingly, gave the decision to the more powerful car. Kallstrom's performance was amazing in the 180 B but no less so was that of Tony Fall in a similar car which finished fourth behind Ove Andersson's Peugeot after stopping on almost the last section with a broken distributor when comfortably in third place and ready to claim a Datsun 1-2-3. Ford dominated the early part of the event with Clark and Makinen leading and Mikkola trailing in fourth place after going off the road for an hour. But then Clark broke his steering and his exhaust and was out while Makinen had what was for him a very rare accident and piled up the car. This left Rauno Aaltonen in a Datsun 240 Z contesting the lead with Kallstrom and Mikkola until the two Finns hit the same bank and broke their

motor cars. In the last stages, Mehta pulled up to overhaul Kallstrom and finally win when the Swede got stuck on a muddy hill. The most unfortunate team of the rally were Porsche who were everyone's favourites at the start with their Carreras but Zasada tipped his up while Waldegaard had nothing but suspension trouble and retired on the last leg with a broken oil cooler.

The American round of the World Rally Championship, the Press on Regardless, looked as if it was going to attract at least a modicum of foreign interest when the Fiat team entered two cars and Fiat Polski three but in the end it was only the Polish cars that went and won the team prize as well as taking sixth place overall. The rally was led almost from start to finish by the talented young Canadian, Walter Boyce, who at the wheel of a Corolla gave Toyota their first win in the World Championship. Second overall was James Walker in his private Volvo 142 S and it was similarly private cars driven by Smiskol (Datsun 240 Z) and Buffum (Escort RS) that finished third and fourth overall to gain quite useful points for those two manufacturers. The problem for the POR still remains; namely that the distance separating the USA from the home base of many of the teams contesting the rally championship makes it economically impracticable to contest it with a full team of cars shipped over from Europe. What with the Rideau Lakes and the Heatway Rally—Canada and New Zealand—being added in 1974, the problem of making a World Rally Championship will become a reality and it is possible that the only way to tackle it is by making it a driver's championship so that a manufacturer's chosen representatives can fly out to drive whatever vehicle he or his subsidiary makes in the country or area where the rally is being held.

To concentrate now on Alpine's victories, these were the Monte Carlo Rally, the TAP Rally, the Acropolis Rally, the Austrian Alpine, the San Remo and the Tour de Corse, plus of course the Moroccan Rally already discussed. Of these, the Austrian Alpine is still not finally decided and if BMW succeed with their protest to the CSI, then that may have to be dropped from the list of Renault Alpine victories.

The Monte Carlo was a predictable result though in the early stages, a gentleman called Hannu Mikkola in a Ford Escort RS not only led the rally but looked set to finish that way. However, the inclusion of such tests

as Moulinon-Antraigues with their narrow dry roads were a gift to the fleet of blue cars and Mikkola had to be content with fourth overall and first in the Touring Category. However, another Scandinavian, Ove Andersson, was in there with a works Alpine fighting to take his second Monte win but he was narrowly beaten by that most ebullient of French rally drivers, Jean-Claude Andruet. Lancia had made quite a bit of the running with Sandro Munari in a Fulvia until he left the road but they made the running after the rally by signing up Andruet to join Munari in their Stratos team. Opel made an impression with their automatic Asconas which finished in twelfth and thirteenth places with Anders Kullang and Lill-Bror Nasenius while Sylvia Osterberg won the Ladies Award with a conventional Ascona. Fiat had a bad start to the season and lost all but one of their works cars but that one, driven by Lele Pinto, did finish in seventh place just ahead of the only Lancia to finish, that of Harry Kallstrom.

The TAP Rally was run for the first time ever in March and the biggest change that the competitors found was that there was so little time between the melting of the snows and the rally that the roads were in atrocious condition. The rough going accounted for nearly all the works cars including the Alpine of Darniche and the BMW 16 valve of Warmbold so that the final result was a one-two for Alpine with Therier and Nicolas with the loaned works Citroen of Francisco Romaozinho finishing third and Fiat picking up useful points with a Turin prepared but locally entered and driven Spyder that finished fourth after all their works cars had retired.

In Greece, the roads are generally wider than in Portugal but the rate of attrition was still high with BMW Motorsport losing both their cars in the early stages, Ford losing Will Sparrow and his Mexico-won works drive, and Toyota lost Ove Andersson with a broken inlet manifold. Darniche with his back still hurt after his Moroccan win fell out almost straight away which left Therier and Nicolas to lead the field. Nicolas had a few problems and finally finished third behind Rauno Aaltonen who in a very determined drive took a Fiat 124 Spyder to an excellent second overall behind Therier. Chris Sclater scored points for Ford by finishing seventh in his Kleber-Wheelbase car after losing a wheel while Porsche Salzburg finally got one of their VWs to the finish in a

World Championship event when Georg Fischer came fifth.

The Austrian Alpine will long be remembered for its atrocious route details and vast list of amendments on the last day which finally led to all the trouble and recriminations that we have been plagued with ever since. The rally featured some very nice stages with quite a few mixed tarmac and loose on which the BMW of Warmbold seemed to excel and no one could touch him. Alpine had only Darniche and Nicolas and though they were closing on him in the latter stages, there is no doubt that without the problems of those last few controls the German driver would have won his second championship event this year. Saab were there as well and Blomqvist was giving a very good account of himself until the differential broke but it was Eklund who surprised everyone by coming through to practically dead-heat with Darniche, the nominal winner. Waldegaard had a steady rally in the second BMW to finish third but there was nothing here to presage his drive on the RAC Rally. Fiat again did not have the best of fortune and it was left to Hakan Lindberg to come in fifth and earn some more points for them after Paganelli and Pinto had both left the road.

The San Remo vied with the TAP and the Acropolis as one of the best organised events of the championship but the speed restrictions imposed by the Italian authorities force the organisers to choose narrow, incredibly twisty roads which admirably suit the little Alpines so Therier's victory was not unexpected. Maurizio Verini's was the only Fiat to come through without any problem and this up-and-coming young Italian beat all the established stars to take second place points for Fiat who for once had a remarkably good finishing record. Lancia started with three cars but Ballestrieri broke his front suspension trying to stay with the Alpine while Lampinen had engine trouble and punctures which put him behind Lancia's new man, Mauro Pregliasco.

In a similar way to the San Remo, the Tour de Corse is a rally which is peculiarly suited to the petite, agile Alpine. It takes place entirely on the island of Corsica and uses one hundred per cent tarmac roads which are so twisty that for many years, there was a challenge for the competitors to try to lose no points on the road section which was set at only 37.5 mph. In these conditions, the Alpines have always been tops and this year was no exception with the diminutive cars filling the first three places overall. In fact, the rally had to be somewhat curtailed in the middle due to an incredible snowstorm which cut off most of the roads over the centre of the island. It speaks very well for the organisation of this event that they were able to devise an alternative route and get the competitors round to carry on. There was little to break the Alpine domination except a lone Escort driven by Guy Chasseuil that finished fourth, but it was very pleasant to see Jean-Pierre Nicolas winning an event after playing the bridesmaid to his team mates for so long.

The only event not to be mentioned in any detail so far is the Polish Rally and this was Alpine's only failure during the whole year. Like Fiat, they sent just one works car driven by Jean-Luc Therier and there seems little doubt that he would have won this East European Safari of mud and high speed had it not been for missing a special stage! This curious stroke of mismanagement was one fault that could not be laid at the organiser's feet as, if their timing and average speeds left much to be desired, the road book was quite good. Alpine protested at the finish but it was disallowed and started the Warmbold versus Cheinisse duel that was to have its next airing on the Austrian Alpine. Naturally it was the young German who was getting a ride from Fiat in the vain hope that he might be able to win this rally for them and win it he did by a very, very large margin for second place man was driving a Wartburg and was literally hours behind.

So that was 1973 that was. A clear win



Above: Lancia Stratos, Andruet and "Biche" on the Lyon Charbonniers. Below: Davinder's Colt Gallant heads for the spectators towards the finish of the Safari on the run-in to Nairobi.



for Renault Alpine and Jean-Luc Therier as the World's best rally driver despite this funny European Rally Driver's Championship that Sandro Munari won. Let's hope that during the enforced recess in our sport, we can have a bit of clear thinking about these championships and how we can make them mean more. If only the BPICA would relent its implacable attitude and change the major championship to be a combined one for drivers and makes (as in Formula One), then perhaps we could have some meaning in the competition during the year. As it stands at present, only one or sometimes two manu-

facturers try to do the whole series of events and thus being a World Championship round does not mean that you get a good entry from all those manufacturers interested in going rallying. Have you ever heard of Formula One teams giving the US Grand Prix a miss just because of the distance involved. If the championship is put together in the right way, it will attract the right sort of money to enable half a dozen teams to put a circus on at each of the qualifying rounds to make each of them more interesting in the general background of the championship. At the moment, practically no one cares.

Our centre spread this week depicts the St Bruno sponsored Toyota Celica driven by Ove Andersson and Gerry Phillips on the RAC International Rally of Great Britain. Toyota are showing a genuine interest in European rallying and with the Celica Toyota have a most suitable strong and reliable car. A Celica gained points on the World Rally Championship for Makes earlier this Autumn to give this go-ahead Japanese manufacturer its first taste of truly international success. Two cars were entered on the RAC Rally and their meticulous preparation coupled with the smart St Bruno livery made the Toyotas a favourite with enthusiasts following the rally.

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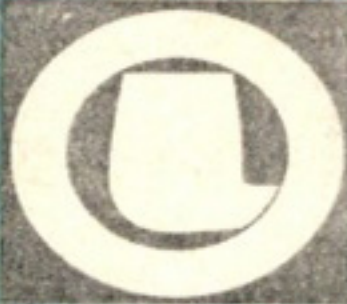
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Vintage year for Clark

By IAN SADLER

Roger Clark and Jim Porter virtually had the RAC Rally Championship wrapped, tied-up and delivered to order. Such was the domination of the Leicestershire pair, winning ten of the fourteen event series. The only events Roger Clark did not win were the Circuit of Ireland (off on the Safari); Texaco Rally (not entered); Manx Trophy Rally (mechanical failure) and the RAC International (second to Timo Makinen). The only round Clark did not tackle with his regular, ever since he started rallying co-driver, Jim Porter was, of course, the RAC where Jim Porter acts as Assistant Clerk of the Course. Many of the rallies through the year were close and the level of competition was of extremely high quality. The increasingly commercially operated cars of top drivers, well presented and often with similarly identifiable service cars, helped create an almost circus-like atmosphere at many of the start and finish venues.

Even with the domination of the blue and white Esso Uniflo Escort of Clark and Porter, interest in other drivers remained high throughout the year. Peter Clarke (Silent Night Divans and Upholstery) figured well during the earlier part of the series and a trio of Tony Pond (Norman Reeves Motors), Tony Fawkes (Cables and Components) and Barry Lee (Centre Hotels) all featured well in latter rounds. Other drivers to achieve outright wins on RAC Championship rounds, apart from Makinen on the RAC, were Jack Tordoff (Circuit of Ireland), and Adrian Boyd who won the Texaco and the Manx Trophy for his sponsors, R. E. Hamilton of Belfast and Lombard and Ulster.



The Clark/Porter Team Esso Uniflo ensemble on the Knapdale stage of the Burmah.

Snowman

The first round of the championship, the Highland Car Club's Snowman Rally attracted a very varied and encouraging entry with Will Sparrow, Vauxhall Firenza; Robin Eyre-Maunsell, Chrysler Imp and Roy Fidler, Datsun 240Z helping to alleviate the inevitably continuous stream of Ford products down the starting ramp. One driver who had truly come from afar was New Zealander, Mike Marshall, who was driving his WoolMark Escort which was still over from the '72 RAC. Roger Clark won the rally this time (the previous year he rolled off the road after a tyre deflated) with an easy and trouble-free run.

Scottish driver Bill Taylor, who missed winning his home championship by only one point last year, achieved a very encouraging second place. Mike Marshall took third place with an impressive performance. Two very unlucky drivers were Scottish Champion Jimmy Rae who retired on only the second stage with a broken flywheel and Alan Conley, who had entered a Clan Crusader usually kept for less rough rallies. Conley's car broke a drive coupling only four stages from the finish and lost sixth place. Imp-power was upheld by Robin Eyre-Maunsell who finished the rally sixth and class winner. The event was

well run and the stages were all forests and well received with the exception of a very rough track along a disused railway.

Mintex Dales

The Dales was a very lucky rally for Roger Clark. He stopped half way through an airfield stage with a broken distributor drive and lost 30 minutes putting it right only to find that the stage had been cancelled when a land owner blocked the route. Will Sparrow driving the Martins Group 2.6 litre Firenza challenged Clark throughout the rally and finished only 34 seconds in arrears. Roger Clark's other piece of luck was when the very first stage was cancelled due to timing problems. Clark had spun on the stage and had difficulty restarting, losing more than 30 seconds. The Dales started on Friday evening and the route lasted until Saturday afternoon. The stages were a mixture of good forests and a number of airfields. Snow posed a tyre choice problem on the Stang stages. Bob Bean drove his old Escort TC into fourth place behind Peter Clarke while Eric Jackson brought his four-year-old Escort home fifth. Unluckiest crew were Robin Eyre-Maunsell and John Brown who had to sit through an extremely high speed end over end roll. The

ex-works Imp finished up as just a ball of scrap.

Circuit of Ireland

The "Circuit," usually a favourite for entries from mainland Britain suffered badly in this respect. Most would-be competitors were frightened-off by tales of sabotage and violence. One person who did have the good sense to realise that the troubles are confined to only certain areas was Jack Tordoff who took his new Porsche Carrera over and won the rally. New Clerk of the Course, Malcolm Neill bravely went ahead with his plans to run the Circuit and as well as Tordoff he was rewarded by a handful of overseas entries including Ron and Dave Smith, John Walters/John Hobcraft and Marek Gierowski/Dave West. The Circuit of Ireland is traditionally a gathering of really quick rally cars, of which there are none quicker than the top Irish machines. Three Carreras were entered, the other two in the hands of Ronnie McCartney and Reggie McSpadden and Cahal Curley had his lightweight McEnaney bodied BMW with Alpina engine. Alpina engined cars were also in the hands of Eamonn Cotter and David Agnew while Derek McMahon and Robert Ward were also in BMWs being looked after by the Autoextra Equipe. Billy Cleman campaigned his rather untidy Escort and was told by the scrutineers to bring it back in a more presentable form if he wanted to start the rally. The rally ran smoothly—without getting mixed-up in any warfare—and Adrian Boyd in the Lombard and Ulster RS1600 soon forged ahead, despite a troublesome axle and an oil consuming engine. Disaster struck Boyd in the last stages of the rally however when his engine let go with a connecting rod through the side allowing Jack Tordoff who was firmly second to cruise home without drama.

Granite City

The Aberdeen and DMC Granite City Rally at the end of April was the second championship event held on Scottish soil. It was to be another win for Roger Clark and also his third win in a row on this rally. Opposition came on this occasion from the Scottish champion, Jimmy Rae who matched Clark's time on the first stage with his Frews of Perth Escort RS and then hounded Clark to be only 23 seconds down at half way. Third was Pat Ryan, enjoying reliability for once with Billy Coleman, Peter Clarke and Jack Tordoff occupying the next places. The afternoon stages saw the demise of Rae who clipped a boulder and rolled the car. Jack Tordoff speeded-up to finish second and Peter Clarke beat Billy Coleman for third place. Pat Ryan's luck ran-out just four corners from the end when he went into a bank and retired. Other good drives came from Tony Drummond into fifth place and David Thompson, the Yorkshire pig farmer, who finished in sixth spot.

Welsh

Just one fortnight after the Granite City win Roger Clark drove the 34 special stages of the Fram-Castrol Welsh Rally to win by more than five minutes from the Castrol Sweden supported Volvo 142 of the fast up and coming Swedish driver, Per-Inge Walfridsson. The entry for the Welsh, 240 places, were filled well before the event and there were many top names with Sclater, Hibbert, Fowkes, Lee, Clarke, etc, plus a strong Irish contingent with Boyd, Coleman, Curley, Campbell and O'Connell but few foreign entries. Last minute entry changes included East African driver Robin Hillyar taking over the Withers Hillman Avenger and Pertti Lehtonen being flown over from Finland to replace Markku Alen at the wheel of an Escort. The rally started with the 22-year-old Swede Walfridsson setting fastest time over the first stage ahead of Will Sparrow (2.6 Firenza). Retirements started early with Pat Moss-Carlsson travelling only one and a half miles before the gearbox broke and Lehtonen being even more unfortunate in retiring on the start line of the first stage with a broken clutch. As the rally wound-on over its two-



The flying Finn's first First!

After four punishing days and nights charging flat-out round Britain, a much-travelled, battle-scarred Escort RS 1600 carried Timo Makinen and Henry Liddon across the York finishing line as the outright winners of this year's RAC rally.*

As well as being Timo's first win after nine game and gallant attempts, it was our tenth outright victory in fourteen years.

Despite feeling a few hundred degrees under the weather, Roger Clark, last year's winner and the reigning rally champion, stubbornly stuck it out to take second place—again in a Ford Escort, again on Dunlop.

Add results like that to all the other race and rally successes we've had so far this year and you could say our tyres really do take some beating.

Which is just one of the reasons why you'll find it hard to get anything better than Dunlop under you.

*Results subject to official confirmation.

DUNLOP leading the field to give you the best

day duration Clark and Walfridsson pulled out in front in an almost nonchalant way to finish in that order on the Sunday morning. Putting up a very determined performance into third place was Tony Fowkes who survived a variety of delays and setbacks and in the process amazed many with his times over the Eppynt stages which he knows well from memory. Jack Tordoff once again demonstrated his super-smooth driving of the Carrera for fourth place and Harold Morley in a similar car finished fifth. One of the surprises of the rally was the performance of Cahal Curley with his lightweight BMW—not a suitable car for many of the forest stages—who finished sixth.

Scottish

This year's Scottish will probably remain as the most dramatic RAC championship event for quite some time. Ford created history on this international with an incredible ten-out-of-ten finish with, once again, Roger Clark the victor. Perhaps even more astounding was the performance of driving genius from Hannu Mikkola who went off early on Sunday afternoon on the Cairn Edward stage. Shekhar Mehta was the first to leave the road here, damaging the Datsun 240Z badly. Mikkola arrived at the hidden right hand bend much too quickly and on seeing the corner drove straight off keeping the car not only upright but completely undamaged. It was unfortunate that there were no spectators around so deep into the stage and Mikkola had to wait 40 minutes for assistance to heave the car out of the soft earth and back to the track. Then started a most amazing and faultless drive from collecting the maximum to finishing in second position just 2 minutes and 33 seconds behind Roger Clark. Hannu Mikkola notched up firsts for a total of 41 of the 55 stages making up the rally. Andrew Cowan was third Ford home, narrowly beating a determined Adrian Boyd who showed he is a forest driver to be reckoned with. Mike Hibbert and Chris Sclater were next home and the top ten was made up with Tony Pond and Tony Fowkes, Bill Taylor (the highest placed Scottish driver) and David "Piggy" Thompson. The 1973 Scottish was acclaimed as the best run yet with smooth organisation and a computer printing out stage times and placings very swiftly. Ninety six cars finished out of a starting entry of 190 cars.

Texaco

The Texaco and the Jim Clark Memorial were run, as the year previously, on the same weekend and as usual the main contingent of championship contenders do the more accessible Berwickshire rally. The Texaco is in no way a second string event though and all the top Irish drivers started making a Porsche, BMW, Ford battle which Adrian Boyd won for Ford by beating his arch-rival Cahal Curley by one and three-quarter minutes. John L'Amie finished third with his Porsche 911S and Ulster Champion David Agnew put his lightweight BMW into fourth place ahead of Reggie McSpadden. Due to the troubles in Northern Ireland the rally was similar to the '72 event in being mainly confined to Antrim and Derry. Stage mileage did not suffer though with a total of more than 200 competitive miles, thirty per cent of them through forests.

Jim Clark Memorial

This immensely popular rally received a massive number of entries (nearly 250 applications) for the enticing offer of 130 stage miles with 50 on tarmac. It was another Clark/Porter benefit but also a very successful rally for up and coming man Russell Brookes who finished second driving a works loaned RS1600. Andrew Cowan, who on the '72 event lost to Clark by only a second, was lying behind Clark for much of this year's event but late in the rally he left the road on a fast blind brow and rolled the Mogil Motors Ford. The car was not damaged but was well enough off to force Cowan's retirement. Vic Preston Junior drove the Jim Clark with Ron

Crellin and finished well in fourth place behind Bill Taylor. Clark was fastest on 13 of the 16 stages—deliberately not putting in very quick times over the last stages after Andrew Cowan's retirement.

Hackle

Three weeks after the Jim Clark win Roger Clark drove north again, this time for the Hackle Rally and, of course, won the event notching up another hat-trick of wins in the process. Based in Dundee the Hackle was a daylight event and Clark stayed ahead of Andrew Cowan to win by two minutes. Jack Tordoff was again entered with the Porsche and so was Vic Preston, this time with Tony Mason. Jimmy Rae and Mike Malcolm were back in action with a works loaned RS1600 but theirs was to be a very short and disappointing rally. Rae only managed to tackle the first stage before a core plug blew and resulted in a cracked cylinder head. Bill Taylor started a good run which was to impress all day but on the road to the very last stage the oil pressure failed. Another who was as unlucky, but surely not as unfortunate as poor Taylor, was Tony Drummond who rolled three times on separate occasions before deciding to call it a day. Tony Fowkes made third position with Tordoff fourth and again Preston finished, seventh on this occasion.

Burmah

After a break over August the first of the final five rounds got under way on the first weekend of September with the Burmah Rally. After 17 tough forests driven largely during the night and a descent of Rest and Be Thankful Roger Clark, yet again, won and yet again beat Andrew Cowan who finished just over two minutes behind. Another regular, who drives his rallies like a train timetable before nationalisation was Jack Tordoff, third overall. Paul Faulkner had a good run (about his only relatively trouble-free run for this very steady and quick driver) to finish fourth ahead of Donald Heggie. Heggie was driving LVX 941J, the ex-Clark "gold" car having given up with the unreliable Clan. It was the start of better times for this very quick Scottish driver.

Manx Trophy

Another great win for Adrian Boyd. Driving his R. E. Hamilton prepared Lombard and Ulster car with John Davenport as co-driver Boyd flew over the 38 stages. Roger Clark suffered his only mechanical retirement of the home-front year here when the crankshaft pulley left the rest of the engine. Cahal Curley finished second just 40 seconds behind

Boyd and both these drivers were well ahead of Manxman Dennis Easthope who finished third. Porsche Carreras were just a little unlucky on this rally with fourth place going to Dessie McCartney who lost time with a puncture and fifth spot going to Malcolm Patrick who rolled during the night. Pat Moss-Carlsson won the Ladies Prize with sixth overall. A slightly unfortunate feature of the rally was in the timing—with many of the stages being cleaned by the really quick drivers.

Dukeries

Second last round before the RAC International was the Dukeries MC rally of the same name. Unusual in that the location is, near Nottingham, not very suitable for a special stage rally, the stage miles were made up with many airfields tests. The organisers also ran into problems with the use of forests so only eight loose, forest type, stages remained on the morning of the rally. It was, however, a very close fought rally with less than a minute separating the first five crews. Predictably Roger Clark won from Tony Pond, who for once had few problems, with faithful Jack Tordoff third from Piggy Thompson's Escort BDE and Jeff Churchill's RS1600. Vic Preston again finished with a top ten placing; this time with Ian Muir co-driving. The route was compact and without too many problems, but some of the few forest stages at Clipstone and Harlow Wood were cleaned.

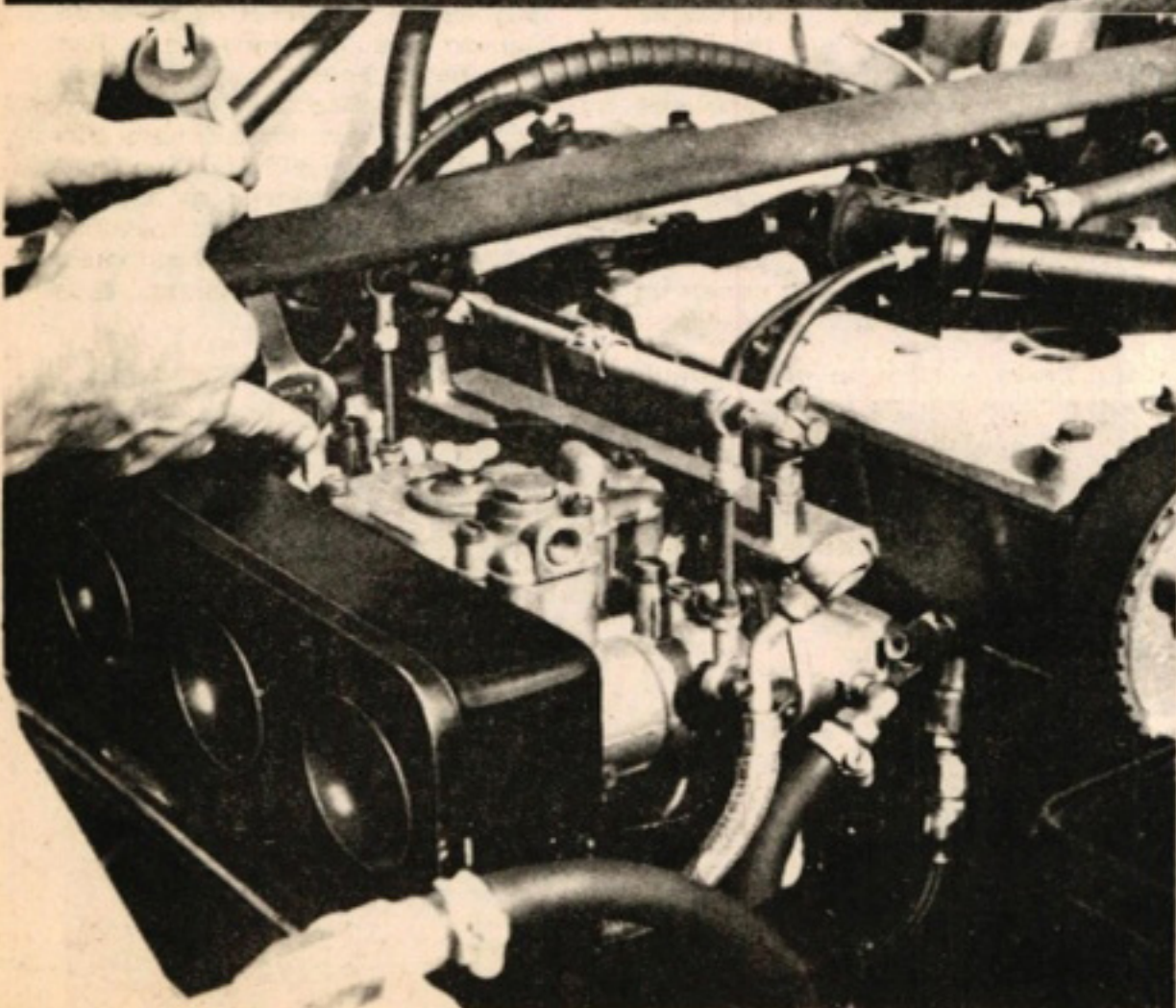
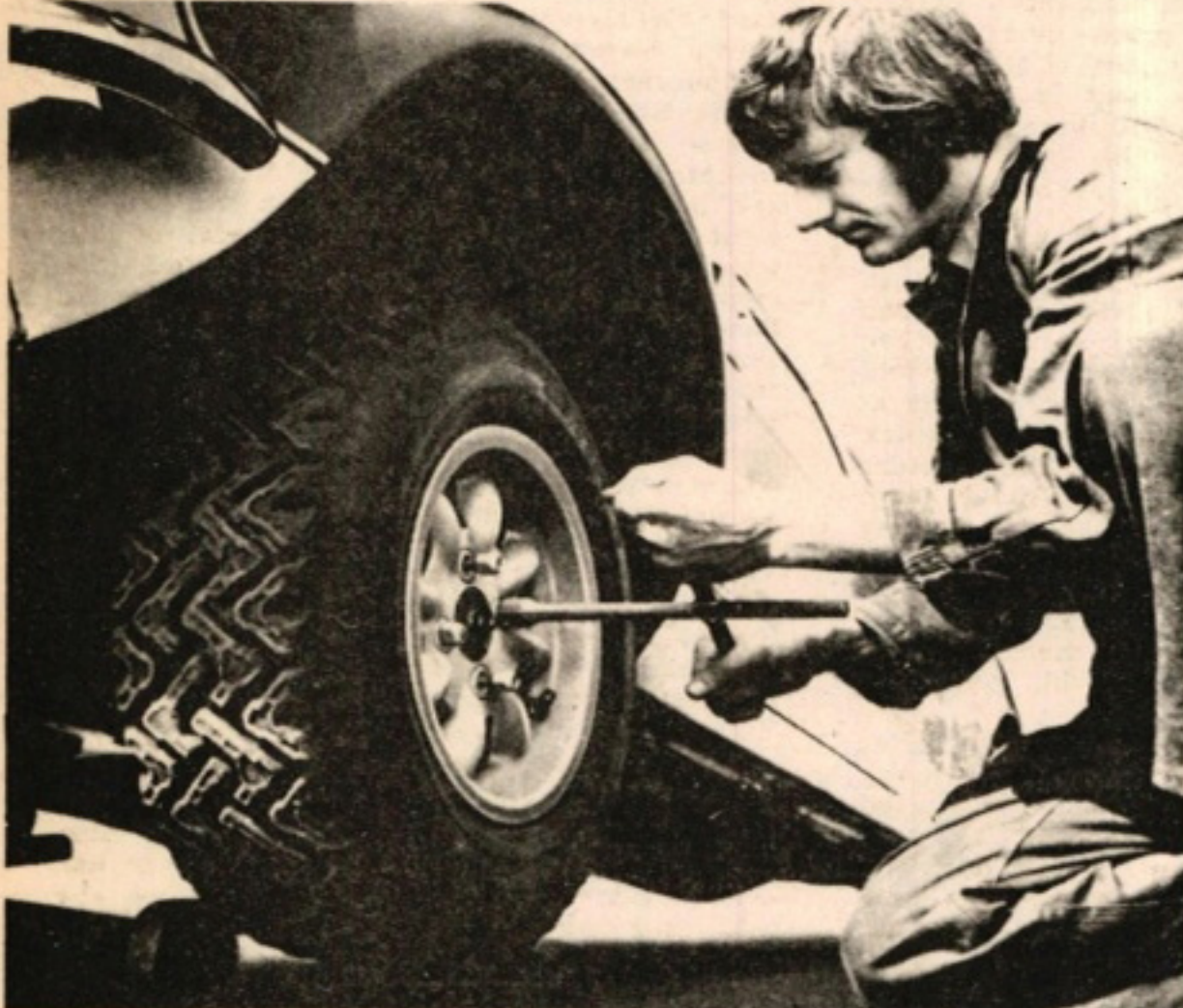
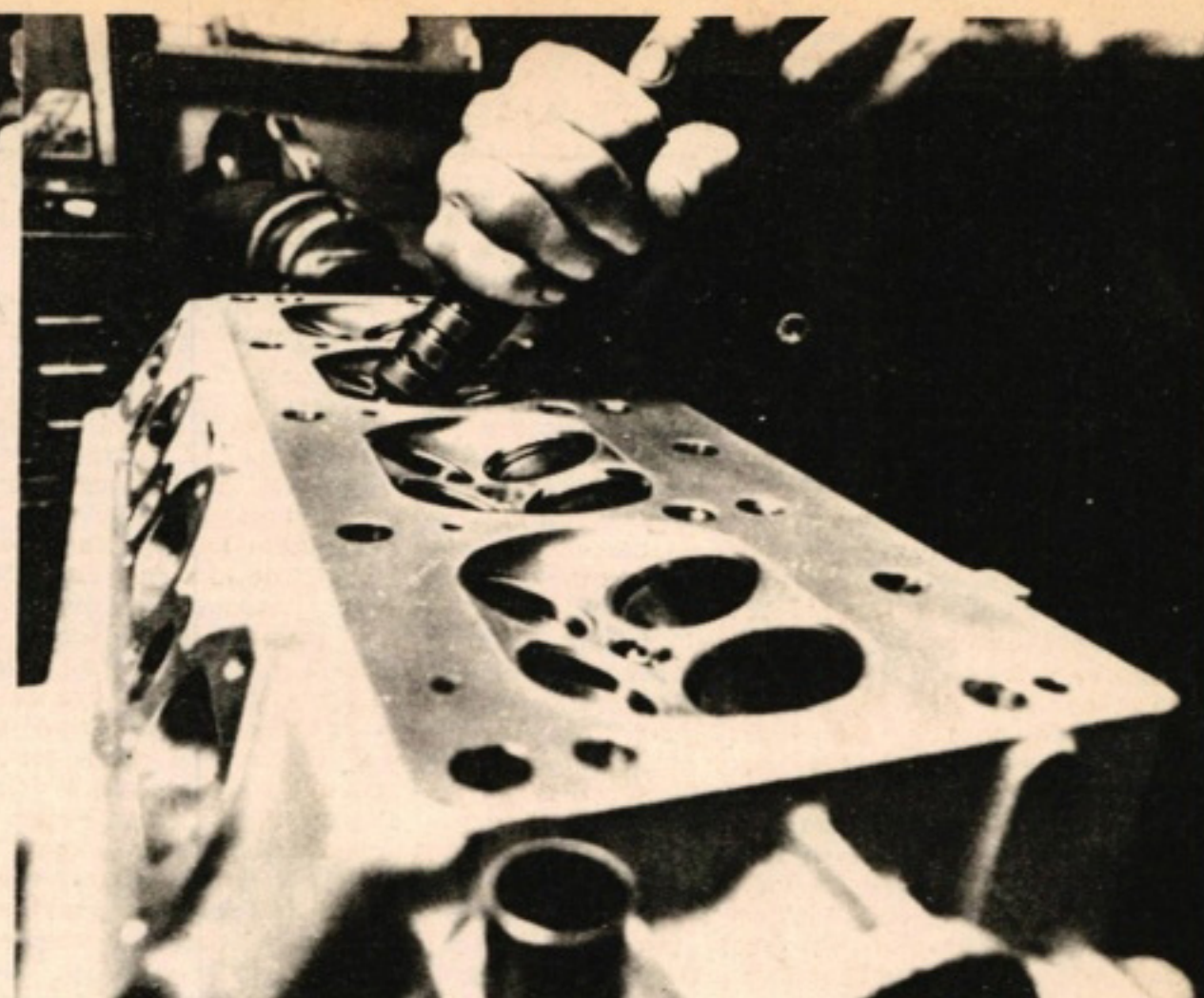
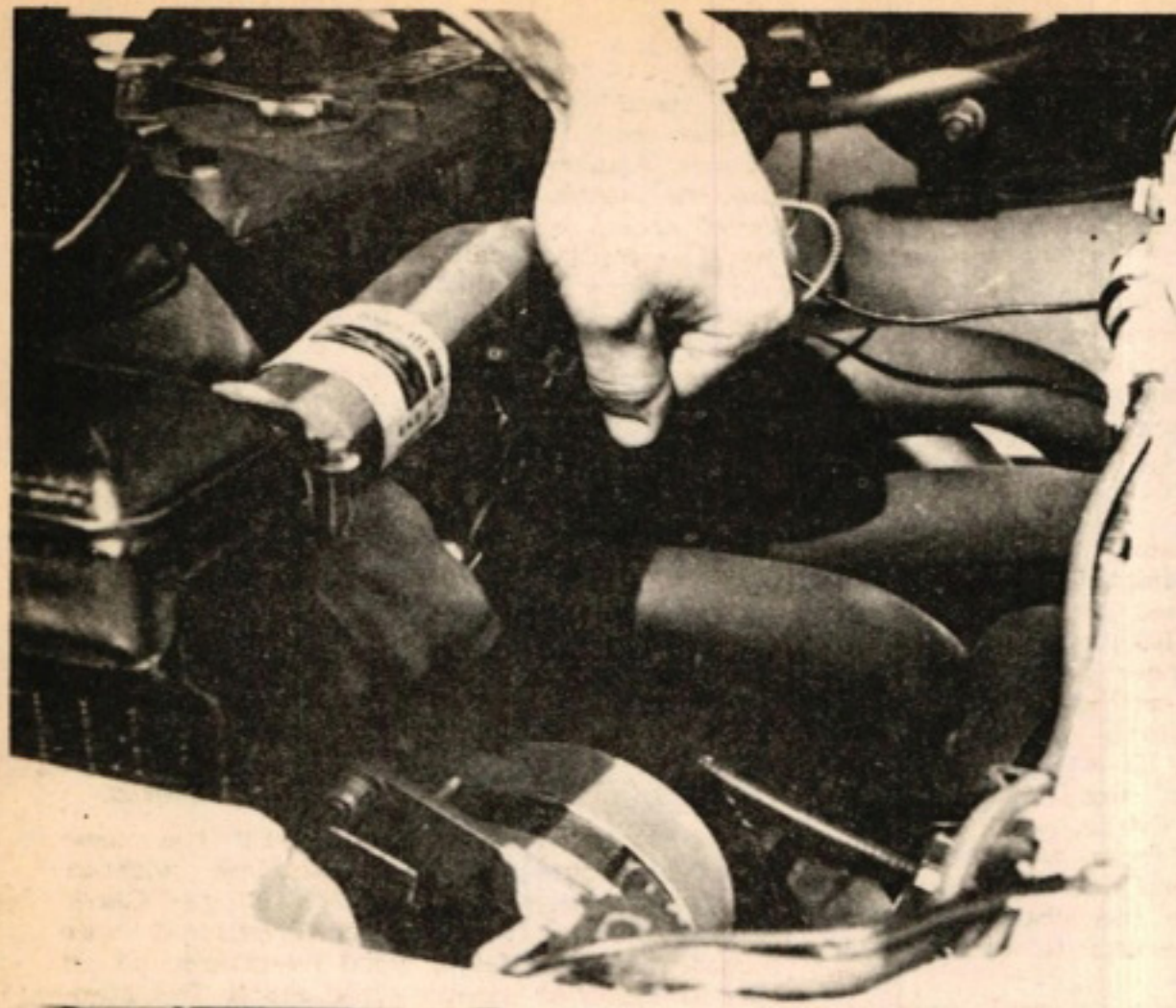
Lindisfarne

Full of surprises from start to finish, the Lindisfarne was a tough and exciting event. All 19 stages were in the massive Keilder Forest area and none were cancelled. Roger Clark/Jim Porter won the event but main interest centred round the young Finn Markku Alen who was over for a sampling of our forests prior to the RAC Rally. Unfortunately steering rack trouble early on put Alen o.t.l., but he and Henry Liddon carried on and drove the rest of the stages. If classified Alen would have finished second. The rough state of many of the forests helped produce a high retirement rate, the most serious of which was Richard Wooldridge's excursion which put him and co-driver Duncan Spence into hospital. Tony Pond put in another fine performance with the Norman Reeves Escort only to retire on the penultimate stage with a jammed gearbox. Overall, the Tynemouth and DMC had staged a very well run and enjoyed event.

RAC International Rally of Great Britain
The recent Ford one-two-three RAC is reviewed in the international section.

Jack Tordoff's usually reliable Porsche Carrera retired on the final day of the RAC.





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Fiercely fought to the last

A little over 12 months ago the BTRDA announced the details of their first Gold Star special stage championship to be sponsored by Esso Uniflo. After some intensive soul searching the club's Rally Committee decided to commit their existing Gold Star Championship from the road to the special stage event. It was heralded as the first Clubmans Championship to be run on special stages to provide the stepping stone for competitors who wished to compete in the RAC National Championship but had not the opportunity to have stage experience before hand. With the generous sponsorship of Esso cash awards exceeded £1,000. So as to provide a high standard of organisation of events, clubs were assisted with purchase of timing equipment and material, and each event was appointed a liaison officer from the Rally Committee to make sure the organisation came up to standard. The Esso Uniflo Gold Star Championship in 12 short months has become a success series of 1973, in fact, such was the demand from competitors that registrations had to be stopped at the 600 mark.

Such was the fierce competition that the overall championship was not decided until the final round. In fact over half a dozen drivers at some stage led the placings, including Eric Jackson, Paul Falkner, Reg Mullenger, and Paul Appleby; but with a fine second place overall on the last event in November, the Iliffe brothers, Richard and Stuart, clinched both the drivers and co-drivers awards. Although they never won an event, they finished nine out of the 11 events, eight times in the first ten. They are undoubtedly a most popular crew amongst fellow competitors and the BTRDA can feel quite happy that their first Clubmans series has been won by true clubmen. Their outright victory in the series has shown that they are now ready to tackle national and international events with complete confidence.

In second place after always being in contention for the leadership was Paul Appleby and Keith O'Dell. Having competed in the RAC Championships previously they decided to confine their efforts this year to the Gold Star Championship and but for a couple of mechanical disasters could have taken off first prize quite easily.

Appleby again did not win an event outright although four second places are witness to his consistency, plus his excellent showing on the Welsh which was a good indication of his natural ability.

Probably the "find" of the series was Tony Drummond from Yorkshire, for although he was already known as an autocross exponent he has now established himself nationally, as a very quick, reliable driver. He only competed on six of the events of which he won two outright, the Bath Chieftain and Hercoc Simpson events, and an excellent second place on the National Moss Tyres. In fact on that event he was beaten by David "Piggy" Thompson whose car he prepares. The Escort which he prepares himself uses a 2 litre BDA unit and Jaguar gearbox and rear axle.

Of the remaining seven drivers in the top ten, only Reg Mullenger, who finished eighth, can be said to have had national rally experience. Malcolm Wise finished in an excellent fourth place using his Escort Twin Cam. Again consistency was the key. Malcolm even started one event without a co-driver, collecting a stand-in after the starting ramp! One of the most popular drivers, in the series, if not in rallying overall, is Bob Chapman. Everyone, even his co-driver Simon Bretherton, still wonders how he manages to travel so quickly considering his handicap of a false leg. With most of the controls on the steering column he certainly has his work cut out to drive the car at all, let alone at

speed, but he managed to win an event outright, the News & Star Derwent, and but for an electrical problem on the South West Stages, he would have finished in the top three. As it was he finished a creditable fifth overall. Chapman prepares his car himself with assistance from F. English, who enter him.

Graham Lepley was a name that few people knew outside the East Midlands before this year. Lepley who contested most rounds in his immaculate Escort RS, complete with "Roo" bars, had a number of mechanical failures, but those events he did finish, which were mostly in the Midland area, he was always in the first ten. Two of the most travelled "gentlemen" in the series were Paul Gilligan and Peter Oddie, who live in the Carlisle area. Apart from always being "there or thereabouts" these two could always be relied on to provide the entertainment whilst waiting for the results to appear at the finish.

A man that could have, and many people expected to take first place overall, was Reg Mullenger. Indeed, for part of the season he led the championship, and in fact won two events outright, the Midsummer Stages, and the Trident, but after his "off" on the Moss Tyres event, he took no further part in the series.

Another to retire from the championship prematurely, was Ian Harwood, who up to the Trident rally, had had a very good season in his hairy Rover V8 engined Escort. Ian relished all types of tarmac and airfield stages, and harnessed the power he had at his disposal well, to put in some very quick times, but in the end had to be content with ninth overall. Finally Vin Huxley came in tenth in this his first attempt at a regular championship. Although he was never in the top three, his season started slowly but by November he was going quicker, and his RAC Rally effort showed that the experience he has had in stage events this year has brought dividends.

So much for the top ten, but in a series with 600 participants, there were many others one can talk about. The season started well for committee member Eric Jackson, co-driven by Don Barrow. They had the honour of winning the first event, the Mansfield and Sutton Observer run by the Dukeries Club. After cries of "fix" from the opposition, Jackson set off on the Chieftain to prove his worth, but rolled himself out of the event and into hospital in one of the most horrific accidents of the year. Luckily he has now recovered well, and immediately resorted to assisting on the organisation of the series. Paul Faulkner ventured out into the forests of the South West stages, and took the major award, but then left for the RAC championship. Harold Morley brought out his Porsche Carrera for the Tour of Lincs and predictably won, but

other true "clubmen" turned up on most events and although not breaking any records, amassed enough points to make them men to watch. In fact there were such a lot of crews who turned up on every event, that one couldn't call it a circus, it was more like an army. Of those who figured at some stage of the proceedings, Richard Acres scored on eight events to eventually finish eleventh, whilst others that definitely deserve a mention are David Ewles in the Willment Escort, John Daker in his Hamblin group Escort, Mike Ranger who never had the best of mechanical luck, and Mick Clarke, who improved throughout the year.

In the co-drivers' section, as we have already mentioned, Stuart Iliffe took the top award, with Keith O'Dell taking second spot. In third came Bob Chapman's co-driver Simon Bretherton, who has recently been elected on to the BTRDA rally committee to represent the views of the competitor, and Chris Gray, Tony Drummond's partner, finished fourth.

The events were selected with the view that competitors could participate without the fear of being swamped by Roger Clark and the like. Only one international was included, "The Welsh," and eventually 11 of the 13 selected events took place. The standard on the whole was excellent. Certain events however stood out above the rest. Undoubtedly the best stages were on the Uniflo South West Stages event run by the Exeter and Taunton clubs. They managed to obtain the forest allocation for that area, and but for some problems with the results, would have come out as top event of the year. For sheer organisation ability and the creation of superb stages without forest, the Bass Charrington Tour of Lincs was exceptional. The ratio of stage miles to road miles was good and generally everything went with a swing. An event to improve over its predecessor was the Cheltenham Festival rally, whose organisers really worked hard to put on an event worthy of championship status. The Moss Tyres event, organised by York Motor Club of RAC fame, certainly produced a close finish and in fact could be overlooked as a contender as the best event of the year as the York club always put on a good event with their proximity to the superb Yorkshire forest.

The enthusiasm for the championship on the part of all concerned has certainly underlined the need for the series. The Gold Star Championship has also developed four or five drivers who could certainly compete on the RAC National Championship with success, and that as far as the BTRDA is concerned is what the series is all about. The highlight of the series however has been the spirit in which the championship has been run. There have been a few minor problems but overall despite the ultra competitiveness of all concerned, friendliness has prevailed on all sides. The BTRDA can feel very happy that their first attempt at a clubman's championship has proved so successful. Esso Uniflo should indeed be thanked for their generous support throughout the season. It is a series that is definitely needed.

Tony Drummond on the Moss Tyres — now an established quick and reliable rally driver.



Arctic Rally in doubt — Finland stops sport

Shock news this week is that the Finnish Parliament has called a halt to all motor sport. The ruling applies until the end of March—putting the Marlboro Arctic Rally and the Hankki Rally in severe jeopardy. First news to reach AUTOSPORT indicated that the two European Championship rallies would not be run but we have heard since that a special deputation consisting of the Finnish Automobile and Touring Club and the Ford Motor Company, with spokesman Timo Makinen, were holding a meeting with the Finnish government to achieve a special dispensation for these two rallies. As we went to press no further news was available and the possibility of a decision in favour was described as "fifty-fifty."

Undercover success for table top rallies

Ford have received the largest ever number of entries for their National Indoor Rally Championship, now with a total of 8270 participants from 208 clubs taking part. These figures were arrived at with six days still to go before the entries closed so the figure may well reach something approaching 10,000 participants.

Fast company for Jimmy Rae

Further to the Autosport story, Special Stage, December 13, it is now confirmed that Kleber/Wheelbase award winner Jimmy Rae will be driving on the Marlboro Arctic Rally as the first event with the Scholarship car. Co-driving Rae will be Jim Porter. The car, the ex-Mikkola RAC vehicle, will be delivered back to Boreham shortly for preparation. Jimmy Rae will be making up the Ford Team of Hannu Mikkola and Timo Makinen.

Commonwealth Rally — definitely off

The Shell '74 Commonwealth Games Rally, which was to have been held with international participation next January, is definitely off because of the decision of the Motorsport Association New Zealand to suspend all competition, apart from the Peter Stuyvesant \$100,000 international race series, as a result of the petrol shortage. Rally organiser Errol Inwood, who has spent the better part of three years setting up the event, publicly expressed his disappointment in local newspapers and said that he would never attempt to organise another major rally. The sport will be much poorer if he adheres to his decision. The 1974 Heatway International Rally is also in doubt at this stage. Even if the petrol situation improves over the next few months, there is some doubt as to whether sufficient time will remain to be sure of running the event, which has been given world status, in the manner in which it should be conducted, according to organiser and rally director Murray Thompson.

RAC Tribunal

At an RAC Tribunal held on December 13, 1973, the following decisions were announced. The Tribunal found that the August Moon Rally, organised by the South Bucks Motor Club on August 25/26 1973, was not contrary to RAC Regulations. The Tribunal criticised the format of the results and time cards, and felt that the paperwork issued to competitors should have been more explicit. The Tribunal ordered that an RAC Steward should be appointed to the next August Moon Rally to observe the event.

The Tribunal found that the Caernarvonshire and Anglesey Motor Club's Gwynedd Rally on 25/26 August contravened SSR S35 in that the majority of the Selective Sections had a target time in excess of 30 mph. The Tribunal could not accept as an excuse that human error was responsible, and fined the club £200 plus £50 costs. The rally was declared illegal and the results declared null and void. However, in view of the fact that documentation and selective target times were available to competitors in advance of the start time, the Tribunal found that the competitors in turn were accessories to the event and ordered that entry fees should not be returned. An RAC Steward was ordered to be appointed to the next restricted road rally organised by the club.

The tribunal found the Synchro 68 Auto Club's Cartune Rally on September 8/9 was not run in accordance with SSR S13 in that insufficient information was given to competitors regarding selective target times and time allowed for traversing quiet zones through populated areas. The Tribunal fined the club £50 plus £20 costs and ordered that an RAC Steward should be appointed to the next road rally promoted by the club.

Stewart to rally?

Jackie Stewart made no reference to his rally plans at his "Good-bye" dinner in London last week out Stuart Turner said that he wouldn't be letting the World Champion forget. "I'm waiting for a few months," said Turner, "until he gets bored with this retirement business." Stewart admitted in an AUTOSPORT article last summer that he had promised to do a couple of rallies for Ford. "I'm sure that Jackie would put up a fair show," said Turner, "certainly better than some other racing drivers who've tried rallying."

More Awards in Castrol/Autosport series

More awards will soon be announced for the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Special Stage Rally Championship. The additional awards will be for co-drivers plus awards from a lighting company and a tyre company. The final event to bring the total of championship rounds to 12 will be a forest rally, a restricted to be organised by the Welsh Border Car Club. Many may be wondering what is this new rally. The event officially called the "Welsh Border Stages Rally," will be an entirely new event, to be run in a compact area of about 30 miles radius of Oswestry. No final format has been decided as the club, who will be running their first ever stage event, have still to finalise negotiations with the Forestry Commission and local landowners. Two special spectator stages are planned in private estates. The Welsh Border Car Club have successfully run their Border 200 rally since the early '50s and in anticipating that the future of rallying lies in special stage rallying the idea for the forest rally came about.

European Rally Championship for drivers — results

	Arctic Rally	Costa Brava	Lyon/Charbonnières— Stuttgart/Solitude	Firestone	Isle of Elba	Circuit of Ireland	Tulip Rally	YU Rally	Welsh Rally	Paris-St Raphael	Semperit Rally	Scottish Rally	Zlatni Plassatz	Vltara Rally	Danube Rally	Baltic Rally	San Martino di Castrozza	Tour de France	München-Wein- Budapest	Cyprus Rally	Spanish Rally	
1 Sandro MUNARI } Mario MANUCCI }		20		20	4									15	12		20	20			111	
2 Sergio BARBASIO Walter ROHL		10			15						12 15		20	20	15 20	1	3		20		75 75	
4 Donatella TOMINZ					12			20	8			20									41	
5 Roger CLARK									20												40	
6 Atila FERJANCS								15			1		12								40	
7 Raffaele PINTO	15										10						15				40	
8 Jack TORDOFF				3		20															23	
9 Marc ETCHEBERS				12																	22	
10 Jorge BABLER Gerd BEHRET																20					20	
Stig BLOMQVIST							20														20	
Bert DOLK																					20	
Bernard FIORENTINO			20																		20	
Marianne HOPFNER									20												20	
Timo MAKINEN																					20	
Klaus RUSSLING										20											20	
A. VARMOLD					20																20	

Weekend fun

The Wakefield Albany Inn have devised a way of helping to keep the doldrums away for petrol starved rally drivers this winter. A package deal has been drawn-up, available to all members of RAC approved motor clubs at a cost of around ten pounds per person for a full weekend, with entertainment, at the establishment. The Albany Motor Inn will be providing such features as films, personal appearances of motor sport celebrities, competitions and go-kart racing. There will also be buffets and discos—the only extras for the special weekends being drinks. The weekend bouts of fun should start happening around mid January. Those interested should contact: Mr V. G. Bowditch, Wakefield Albany Inn, Queens Drive, Ossett, Yorkshire. Telephone Ossett 6388. Accommodation will be limited to around 200 per weekend. The hotel is situated just off the M1 at junction 40, the Wakefield interchange.

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125/12 V.10 T/T	new	£3.70
145/12 V.10 T/T	new	£5.20
155/12 V.10 T/T	new	£5.30
155/13 V.10 T/T	new	£5.50
165/13 V.10 T/T	new	£6.00
175/13 V.10 T/T	new	£6.65
165/14 V.10 T/T	new	£6.10
175/14 V.10 T/T	new	£6.95
155/15 V.10 T/T	new	£6.20
155/12 V.10 S T/T	new	£5.55
165/13 V.10 S T/T	new	£6.30
175/13 V.10 S T/T	new	£7.00
165/14 V.10 S T/T	new	£6.60
175/14 V.10 S T/T	new	£7.35
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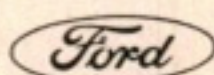
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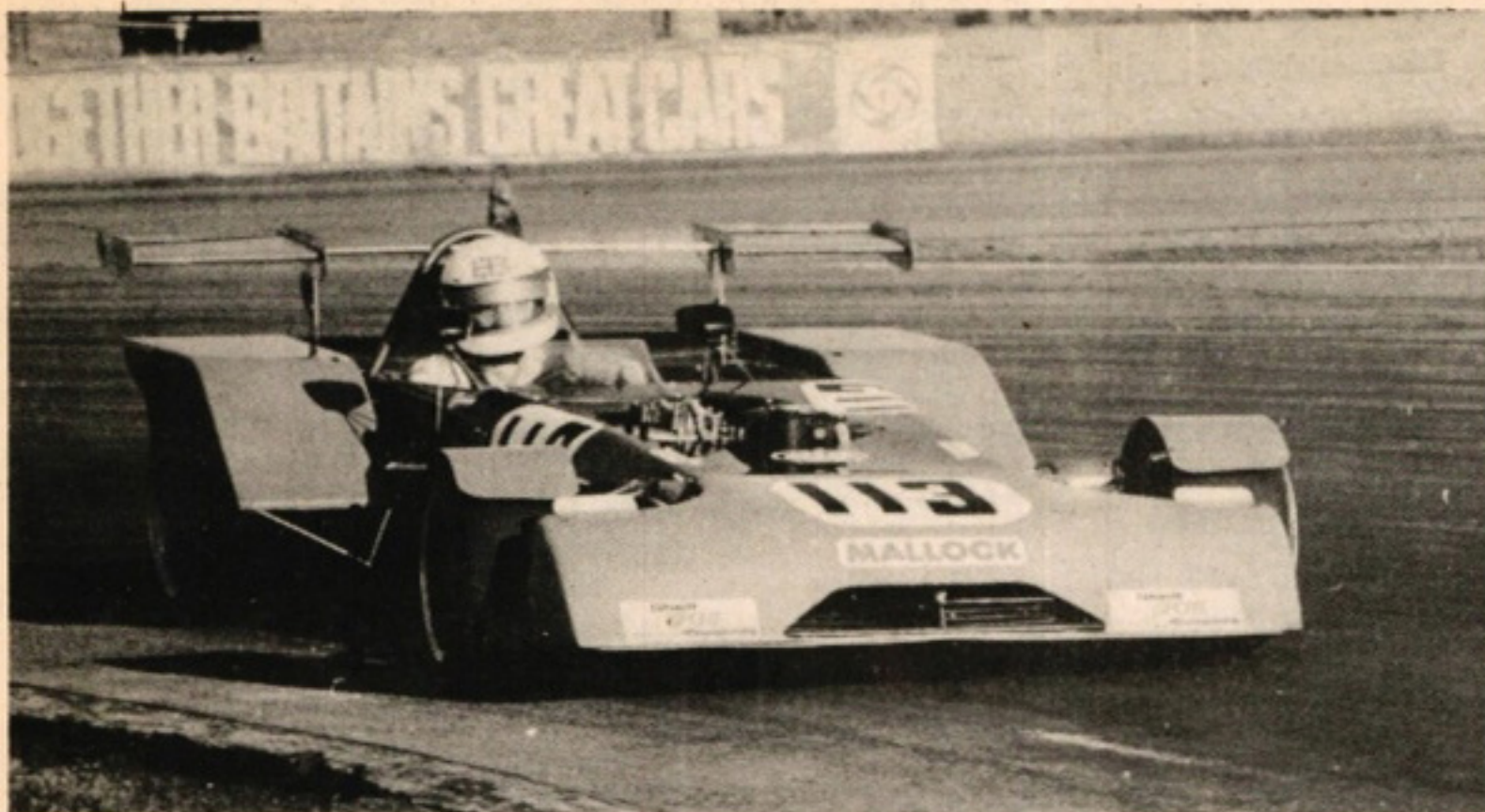
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The ShellSport Clubmen's championship-winning U2 of Richard Mallock, tried out by Derek Bell

Ringling out Clubmen's cars

IAN PHILLIPS looks into Clubmen's racing

and the leading cars with the assistance of Derek Bell

It was way back in 1965 that Nick Syrett decided that the BRSCC should run races for all the Lotus 7s, U2s and DRWs which had been infiltrating the club racing scene in the earlier seasons. He called the formula Clubmen's, and the BRSCC ran the first ever championship in 1965. It was some time before the BARC decided that they too would run a championship for the class but not long after they did the very existence of the formula was threatened with the introduction of F100. However, the Clubmen's drivers banded together, formed the Clubmen's Register and with the merging of the two club championships into the Shell national championship the formula pulled itself together and established itself as the major sports car formula in Britain.

Since those troublesome days at the end of 1969 the formula has made a great deal of progress. The class is now known as Clubmen's Super Sports and the new hard working Register secretary Peter Evans laid on a special day at Silverstone in October so that we could get an impression of just how much progress has been made. Five cars were lined up to be tested and one of Britain's leading International sports car drivers, Derek Bell, agreed to come up and drive the cars and pass on his comments. This was especially valid because Derek used to race a Lotus 7 in the formula in the early '60s.

Clubmen's cars have always been very individual machines with their own character; the majority are built up by the drivers themselves. However, nowadays, there are a number of the cars which are available over the shelf as kits for the purchaser to build up himself or they can be bought complete. The cars at Silverstone were the championship winning works U2 of Dick Mallock, Noel Stanbury's works prepared Gryphon, Mike Sales' works prepared Haggispeed, Richard Groombridge's self-built Hustler and Barry Foley's one-off St Bruno Roughcutter.

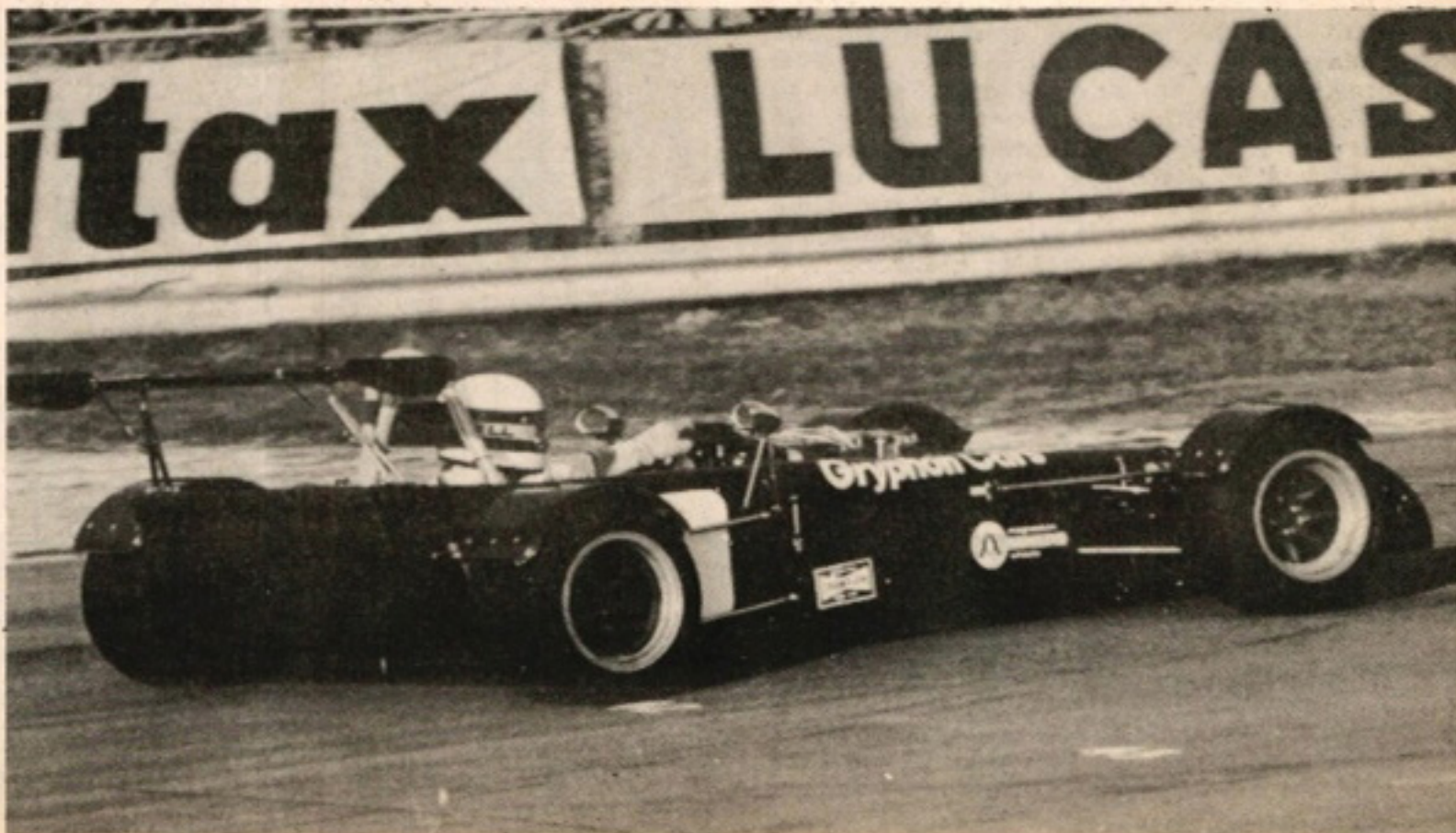
The name of Mallock has been in the club racing scene since 1959 when Arthur Mallock built and raced the first U2. Since that year there has hardly been a season which has passed without one of his creations winning some sort of championship. Arthur is very set in his ways and is still convinced that a front engined car with a solid rear axle is the best layout. Clubmen's of course has to have the engine at the front and must drive the wheels through a maximum of four forward gears. The only other real regulations are that the cockpit must be a minimum width which makes them automatically of

two seater size, also to retain its sports car shape mudguards must be worn at the front and rear. Limited slip diffs are banned but virtually everything else is free.

The Mallock U2 has appeared in many formulae other than Clubmen's. In the early days there were Formula Junior, 1172, F3, F2, FF and F1200 versions. The U2 has undoubtedly been the most popular Clubmen's car and the most successful. The set up is very much a family thing. Arthur has now almost retired from racing himself—he had one win and a second in F1200 this year, but his sons Richard and Ray have all started racing with U2s and it was only this year that Ray drove a rear engined car. Arthur does all the design work on the cars while Richard and Ray build up customers cars in the garages joining their house in Northamptonshire.

Arthur was runner up in the very first BRSCC Clubmen's championship in 1965 while Ray was champion in '71 and Richard this year. In fact with the exception of 1967, 1969 and 1970 U2s have always either won the championship outright or taken the big class.

Bell takes the works Gryphon out of Woodcote.



It was Richard's Shell championship winning car, that Derek Bell drove first at Silverstone. "It was the first time I had driven a front engined car for some time and it's quite different, I'd find myself groping for the gear-change on the right hand side and find myself flicking off switches."

The car was in its championship winning trim with its de Dion rear end, Holbay '73 engine, Lotus Mk 1 Cortina gearbox and Firestone B33 slicks except for the rear axle the other major components are virtually standard on Clubmen's cars. Bell found it "... the most comfortable. I felt immediately at home in it and it felt very nice. Because it was the first car I drove it was difficult to draw any straight conclusions—I'd like to have driven it again though because it was really good. The only problem I found was that it would understeer going into the corners, which is no bad thing, but halfway round it tended to roll and to lift up a rear wheel which created a rather nasty oversteer. It is difficult to gear for this Club circuit, but I found that the U2 was ideally set. I could take Copse in fourth with no problem and just drop down to third for Becketts and Woodcote. The engine had a lot of steam but I was not too happy under braking but I did not really extend it because I was still feeling my way around. The fact that I was quicker in this car than any of the others obviously indicates that it is very good and it was unfortunate that I did not have time to drive it again and have the chance to really get in the groove with it because it was really very nice."

Richard's car is now up for sale and work is progressing on two models the Mk 14 and Mk 15 for next year. The Mk 14 will have a live axle with "new and completely original geometry" and the Mk 15 a de Dion. The front suspension geometry will be revised. The rear bodywork will be new incorporating the mudguards and a rear wing in three sections. The nose will also be revised for greater downthrust.

It has only been in the past couple of years that anybody has come near to making inroads on the U2 stranglehold on production Clubmen's cars. Gryphon Cars was officially created in August 1972 although Andy Diamond, the man behind the company, has been building Clubmen's cars since 1969. In 1969 he won the BARC championship with his 1-litre U2-replica called a Clubmans. In 1970 he started building Gryphons as a part time business in conjunction with his partner and former rapid U2 driver Jo Beavis. As Beavis Engineering they produced cars for Andy himself and Noel Stanbury to drive. The first ever Gryphon was built by Stuart Rolt in the mid-sixties and Andy bought the name from him. Like the first Gryphon all subsequent cars have had independent rear suspension. Andy and his new partner in Gryphon cars, Ted Jarvis, do

all the design work and make the majority of the components including all the fabricated parts. Recently the company moved to a new purpose built factory in St Ives just outside Huntingdon and building Clubmen's cars has become a full time business.

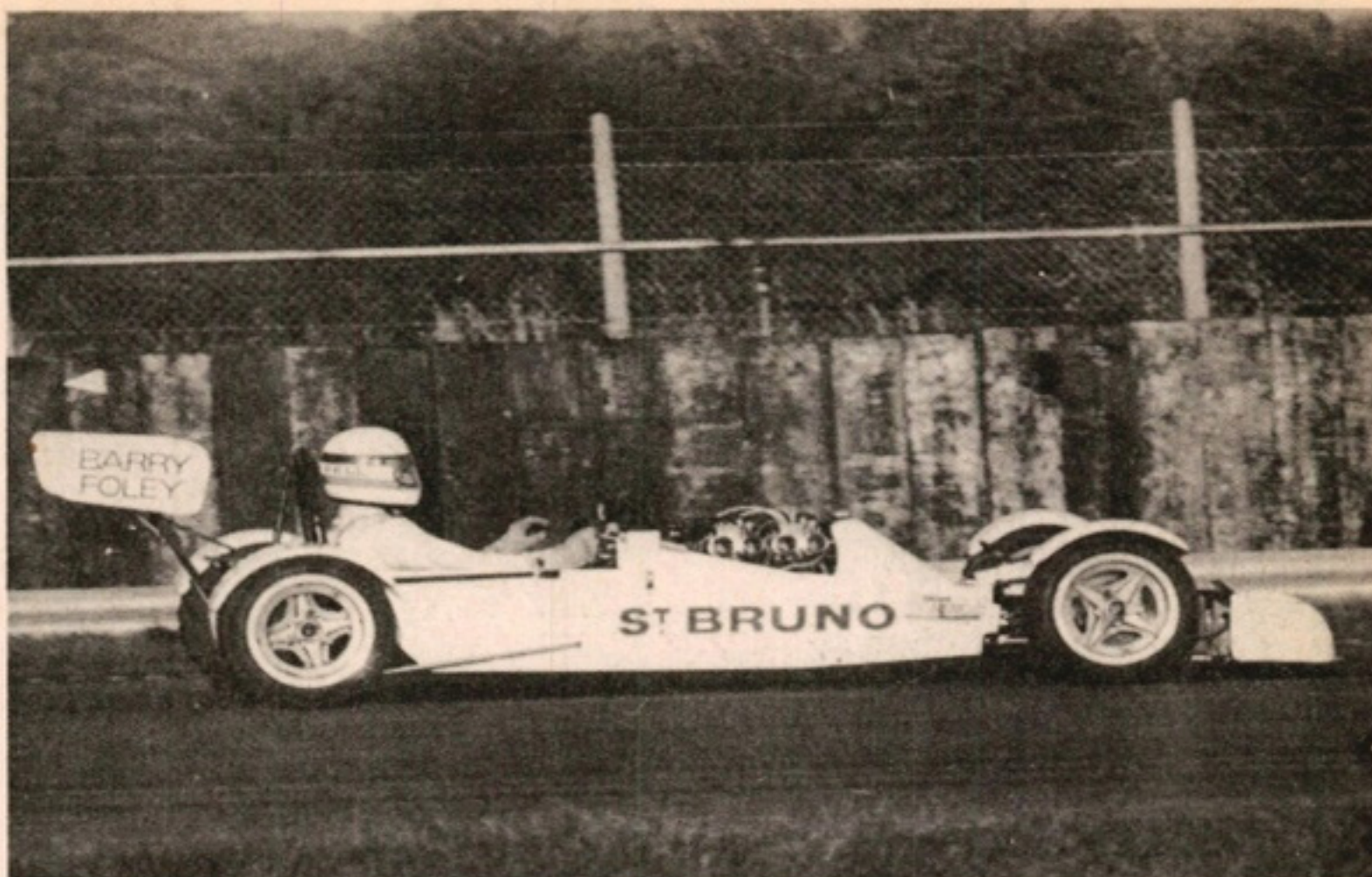
This has come about over the past couple of years. Noel Stanbury ran a car in the 1-litre class and won the Gregor Grant championship while Andy has been running in the 1600 class and was always in the first three places. Noel wanted to move into 1600 in 1972 and have a car run by Andy. A brand new C72 car was designed and built and with it Noel took second place in the championship and numerous lap records despite a late start to the season. This success prompted a number of orders and Andy felt that to do it properly it would have to be a full time business. In 1973 the C73 was designed and built for customers and Stanbury once again drove the works car and it was this which Derek Bell drove.

"Initially I did not like it as there was a vibration from the rear end which I'm told is probably due to the doughnuts. However once I got used to it I really started to enjoy myself—in fact I did not want to come in at all. The great thing about it is that it handles just like a single seater. I found I could brake quite late and just turn it into the corners. It turned very well and with the power applied just flicked the back out slightly which felt very, very good. I felt much happier in the Gryphon than the others because it was so much like a single seater—I think the gearing was a bit out which meant it was not quite as quick as the U2. I found the brakes to be the biggest problem. If I hit them really hard, like in a single seater, it tends to lock one wheel and when it hits a bump will want to spin. However when I started to apply them more gently it was much better and never gave a hint of wanting to do anything strange. Copse is the only corner worth anything on this circuit and the Gryphon was really excellent through there."

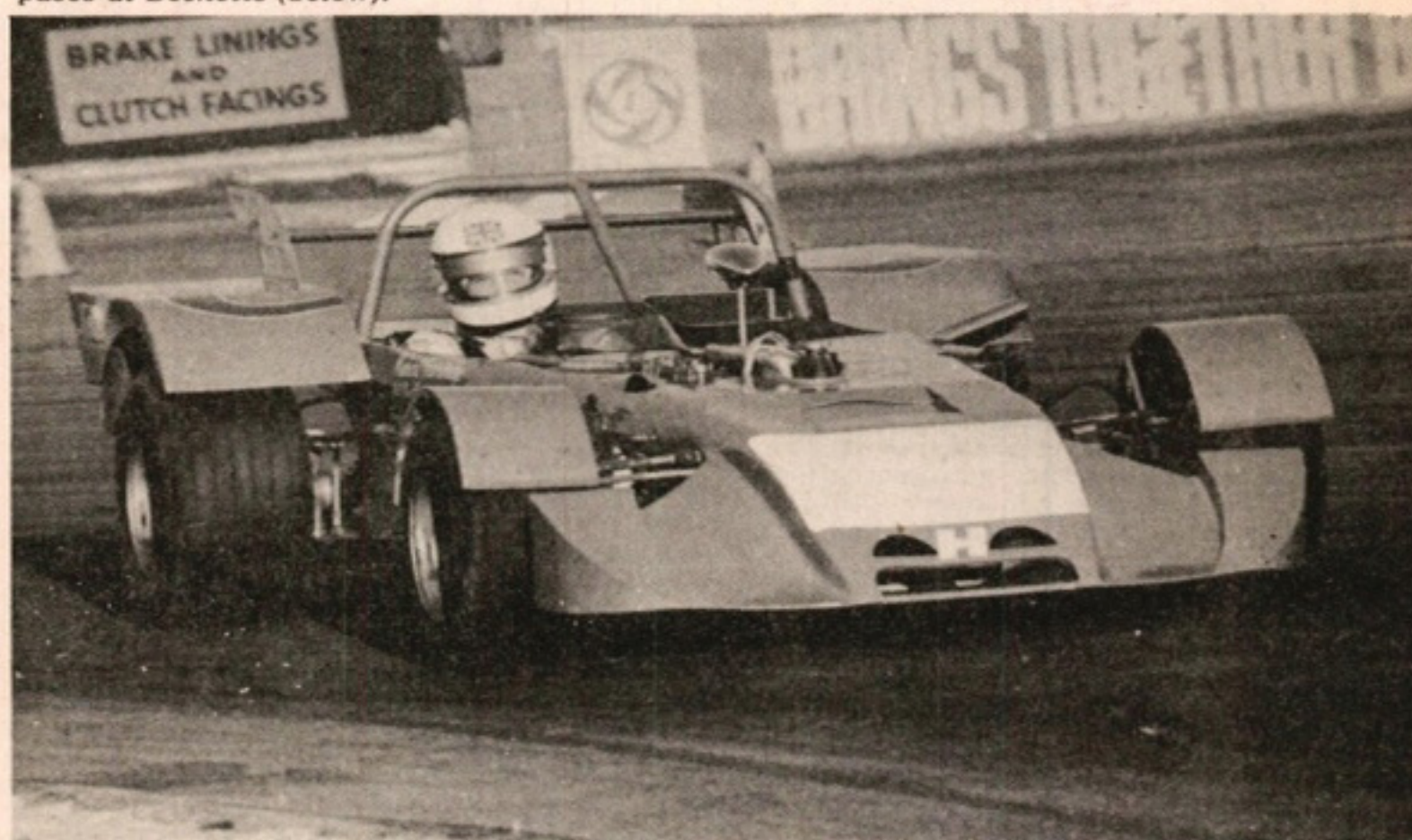
Next year's car the C4A, has already been tested and produced some fairly startling times. Andy has concentrated on aerodynamics and this combined with a revised front suspension is what Noel Stanbury will be using for the biggest attack on the championship from the works to date.

We had a slight problem in testing the Haggispeed in that Derek did not fit in the car and was unable to do any quick laps. The Haggispeed is in fact one of the nicest looking Clubmen's cars and is built by one Bob Le Seur who is known to everybody as Haggis. He's been around in racing for as long as Arthur Mallock, not so much as a competitor but in running cars. Haggispeed Racing was formed in 1963 with a Lotus 18 FJ. After that there were Haggispeed Imps for Tony Marsh and Andrew Cowan while the first successful entry into Clubmen's came with Jeremy Lord's BARC 1600cc championship winning U2 in 1969. Haggis built and prepared this car and then for the 1970 season he designed and built his own car known as the Question Mark which Clive Santo had. The following year there was the Haggispeed modified U2 for Stuart Hunter Cox which still holds the Brands GP circuit lap record. In 1972 the Question Mark came back and was run by Haggis for Mike Sales while the prototype Mk 2 was designed and built. Mike Sales drove it this year and finished seventh in the championship. Although Haggispeed Racing is a part time business, Haggis has found time to build up two further cars for sale and has bits for two more.

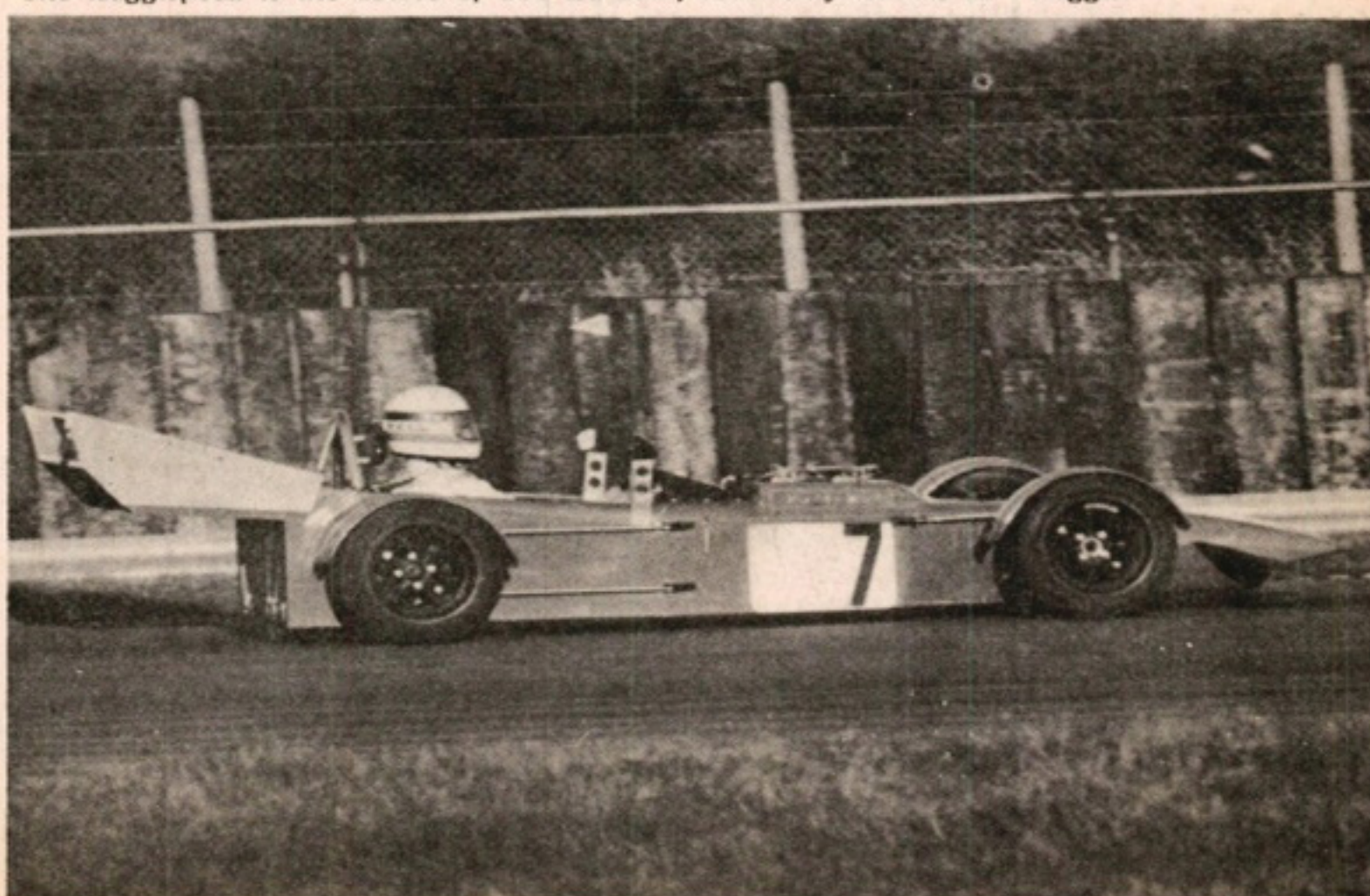
When Bell managed to lever himself into the car and do a few cramped laps (Mike Sales is small and the car had been tailored to suit him) he was unable to say a great deal about it. "The rear end seemed to be very nervous but this was probably because the shock absorbers were screwed right up. The car needs to be softer at the back I think. The front end however worked very well and the brakes seemed to be good but I couldn't get too comfortable and did not extend it at all. It is certainly a nicely made and well thought out car though."

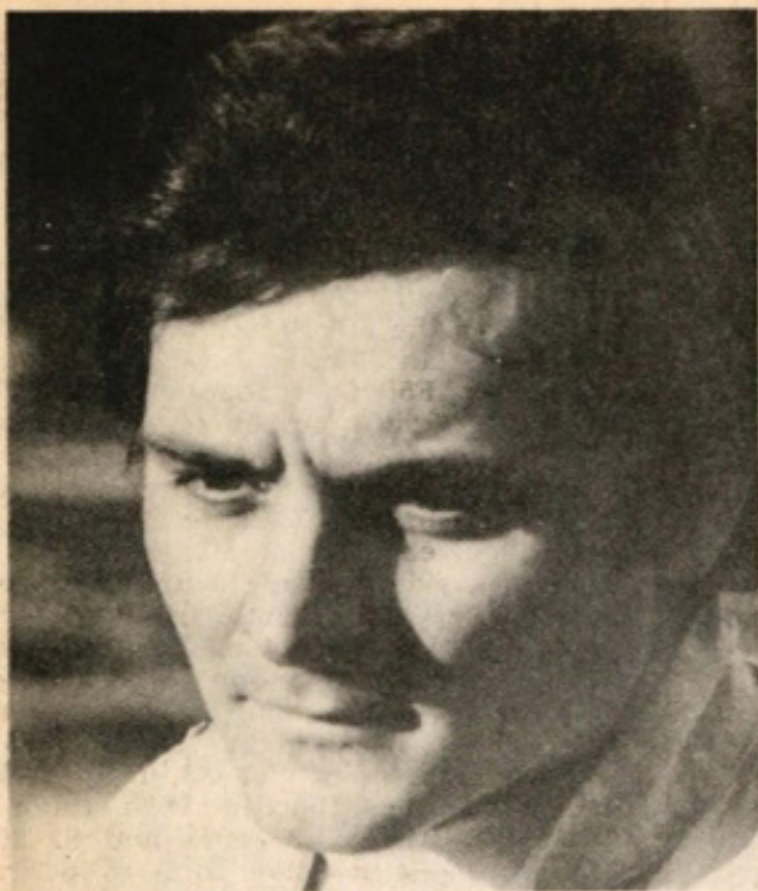


The smart St Bruno which Barrey Foley created (above). Bell puts the Hustler through its paces at Becketts (below).



The Haggispeed is the device of Bob Le Seur, commonly known as "Haggis."





Richard Mallock — U2.

Hustler was a new name to appear in Clubman's in 1972. Its designer, builder and owner is Richard Groombridge who in fact has been racing in Clubman's on and off since 1965. He used to drive Centaurs in both 1000 and 1600 cc form. Richard trained in engineering with Ford before moving to Diva during the hey-day of their front engined GT car. When he left Diva he moved out of the car industry and now works as a diesel fuel injection engineer. The racing interest has never waned though and the large garage in his garden is the scene of much activity. Richard does all the chassis aluminium and fibre glass work himself.

The first Hustler appeared last year but a less than powerful bitza engine restricted its performances. However Richard did score four wins and won the TEAC championship. During last winter the car was completely rebuilt incorporating several of Richard's own ideas on aerodynamics. The engine was swapped for a 72/3 Holbay and this immediately made it more competitive in the big league although the fact that he ran it on intermediate Firestone YB11s was something of a disadvantage as everyone else was on up-to-date slicks. Nevertheless he competed in just six championship rounds and finished ninth in the table and his best result was a second to Dick Mallock at Mallory Park.

Derek Bell was very enthusiastic about the car when he drove it. "It felt extremely good. I think it is the best balanced car I drove, all the springs and shock absorbers are perfectly set which made it very, very smooth to drive. It did not have any nasty traits in it at all. I didn't feel as though I was about to lose control at any time which I have done with some of the others. The layout of the car is obviously very good—it's a pity it's on intermediates, with slicks I think I could have gone quite quickly as I felt very at home in it. It is a superb car for a private effort."

Richard has been very encouraged by this season's results and is currently laying down a design for another Hustler which will be a logical development of the present car. He hopes to have it ready by mid-74 and he hopes to build some replicas for sale although he says that with his present limited facilities it will only be a small number.

Barry Foley's name has been well known in the Clubmen's circle for a long time. For a number of years he campaigned a Lotus 7 in 1-litre form with Robin Hall before they bought the Tim Goss championship winning 7X. Barry is of course well known for his Catchpole cartoons in *AUTOSPORT* and his fertile brain always manages to come up with something different when it comes to Clubman's cars. The 7X sported many different aerodynamic appendages in the two years he had it but its successor was a new concept in Clubmans. Barry and Robin were in fact the first drivers to have outside sponsorship in the Formula when St Bruno gave them support in 1971. They have been very happy with the results and Barry's current car is called the



Barry Foley — St Bruno.

St Bruno Roughcutter.

The car was designed from scratch during 1972 by Barry in collaboration with a number of top line designers. Maurice Phillippe and John Baldwin in America were both involved in the initial concept. Phillippe in fact was originally going to design the whole car but did not have the time (Phillippe in fact used to race a Lotus 7 in Clubmans). Barry lists a number of other big names as his helpers although apparently some of them did not know it!

St Bruno gave the go-ahead in August last year. The advanced concept specified the use of sophisticated materials such as high carbon chrome moly tubing, carbon fibre, chemical etching, titanium, articulated polar movements of inertia, assymetric anti-colour resonance due to gyroscopic precision and a phenomena known as "aerodynamic glue". (It all sounds very complicated doesn't it?) However, to make the design viable in the time available a certain amount of the more extreme ideas were put to one side. The 1974 Roughcutter, whilst having a similar molecular design will incorporate a larger number of these features.

The totally stressed chassis is built from square section high carbon steel while the wishbones and suspension links are in chrome alloy tubing. All the uprights are magnesium. The rear brakes are inboard which is a rare sight on Clubmen's cars. Other sophistication includes a foam filled petrol tank and Graviner fire extinguisher system piped to the drivers compartment and engine bay.

The main impression one gets by looking at the car is that it is very small and light. This is borne out by the fact that it weighs well under 800 lb and that the chassis at the front is a mere nine inches high.

The entire car was built at Barry's garage in Woodford by himself and Ken Robinson including the complex aluminium bonnet section, full width nose, windscreen, oil and



Mike Sales — Haggispeed.

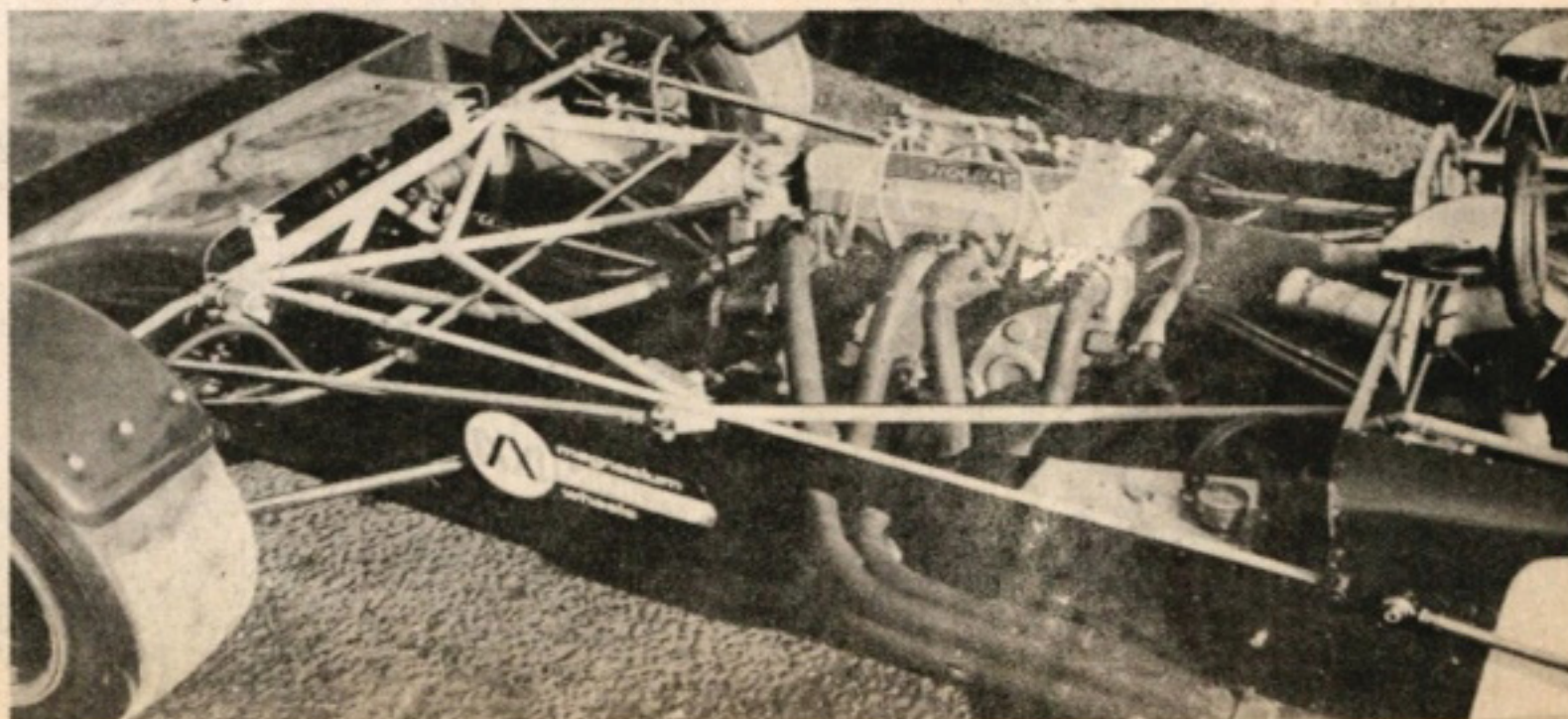
petrol tanks, wings, etc. In an effort to arrive at the ideal, eight differently shaped nose-cones have been built this year, although Barry does admit that they were also built to replace the ones he kept smashing!

Two rather serious crashes kept the car out of the results for most of the season but towards the end it was really sorted and was probably the fastest Clubman's car. In its last three races it earned pole position and in the final one had a runaway victory. In spite of only finishing in four rounds the Roughcutter was fifth in the championship.

Derek Bell stuck well out in the elements when he got in it and, "initially thought it was very nervous but this was probably due to the tyres being cold. The car needs to be driven; if you drive it then it works well but if not it is rather unstable. The braking was magnificent. It appeared that I could go into corners much quicker than with the others especially Woodcote. I could put the power on early and with the balance being right it was really very fast. It's really quite a nice car and obviously a lot of thought and effort has been put into it. It's certainly very different."

What about Clubmen's formula in general? Bell had this to say: "It's a tremendous formula and great fun. I was really enjoying myself especially in the U2 and Gryphon which were comfortable. What else is there that you can spend this sort of money (a ready-to-go 1600 cc car is about £2500) and have so much fun? In Formula Ford it's so competitive because of all the works cars and engines and really it cannot be too much fun. In Clubmen's you've all got basically the same engine and it's fun and there's nothing to compare with it. The cars are quick, surprisingly quick, I thought, and in fact you could get into quite a little bit of bother with them. For anybody starting racing it's the only thing to do, especially now that they handle which they didn't when I started."

The Holbay power unit which is used in most 1600 clubmen's cars.



Purely personal



"I believe F2 and F5000 can run side-by-side with F5000, a very useful national formula in Britain but with F2 continuing as Europe's main formula as a stepping stone for aspiring drivers."

PETER GAYDON

As dark days of impending doom in the form of petrol rationing grow closer, it might seem inopportune to believe there will be racing in 1974 but being an unashamed optimist and comparing today's situation with Suez, I am bound to say that I feel we shall certainly have racing next year although early-season meetings—perhaps up to April—may be in jeopardy. At the time of Suez, during the rationing period, fuel was made available for racing but then the density of meetings was considerably less than it is with today's multi-event weekends. Undoubtedly someone in the political arena is going to object to motor racing and its apparent wastage of precious petrol, and I believe it is this possibility rather than actual shortage which poses the threat to our sport.

Statistically, we don't use much of the stuff at all—did you know that the fuel used in a Jumbo Jet crossing the Atlantic would more than provide for every team's needs for the whole World Championship Formula One series—racing, practising and all! Further, the industry earns ten million pounds a year in exports with no imports bar a few F5000 engines and it also provides jobs for over 1500 people, your Editor and me included!

It would be a travesty of justice to ban racing and leave other sports unscathed. Take horse racing for instance—how much fuel is expended in carrying horses to meetings; the nags race six days a week and on several courses per day too. Socially speaking we should reduce the number of motor sporting events to a minimum to conserve fuel supplies. MCD have cancelled Boxing Day Brands and have also reduced race distances (in future events) overall by 10 per cent which is a good political move; but how about restricting official practice to 10 laps per competitor on short circuits and eight on long circuits? Drivers will always practice as much as they can but a general reduction

will affect everyone equally. Thus there can be no real argument against it and it is good ammunition to show the economy moves taken within the Sport. If a driver can't put in a time close to his best within ten laps perhaps he should take up tiddlywinks instead. It would be difficult for novices, I agree, but times are hard.

The biggest problem will surely be to persuade marshals to use their precious petrol for the privilege of being soaked and frozen at early season meetings. I believe there is a good case here for circuits to apply for business allowances for distribution to marshals. Allowances could be judged on distance travelled to and from the meeting equated with mpg figures for their cars, taken from Autocar or Motor Road Tests.

The past five years have seen the emergence of many new National formulae. In Europe now we have junior National formulae which include Formula Ford, Formula Vee, Formula France, Formula Seat and Formula Italia and on a more expensive scale we have here F5000 and F Atlantic. All these categories in themselves provide excellent racing both for competitors and spectators but I am alarmed that these formulae are being compared and preferred to International formulae already in existence.

It seems to me that a driver who wants to get on in motor racing should have a clearly defined ladder of competition, which he can attempt to climb during his career. Further, a team manager looking for a likely young driver for his Formula 2 team for subsequent grooming to Formula One wants to see potential candidates all racing against each other for comparison. If you were Ken Tyrrell, how much would you like to try and compare the skills of, let us say, Patrick Tambay, Helmut Koinigg and Geoff Friswell. You have no yardstick whatsoever except to say they are at the top of their particular categories but how competitive are those categories? I feel the right way of comparing drivers is to view them at the intermediary levels of International racing. This means Formula 3, followed by Formula 2.

F5000 compared

At the present time we have F Atlantic being promoted as an alternative to F3 and F5000 to F2. Taking the senior pairing first, I find F5000 tremendously exciting and astonishingly fast but it does not have the competitors that are seen in F2.

I give as an example a list of regular competitors in F5000 and F2. In F5000 you have Belso, Edwards, Evans, Gethin, Hobbs, Lunger, McRae, Pilette, Thompson and Van Lennep and in F2 you have Fittipaldi E. and W., Hailwood, Hunt, Jarier, Mass, Pace,

Pescarolo, Peterson, Schenken and Wisell.

All of the drivers in F2 have competed in F1 whereas only Gethin has been a regular F1 driver from the F5000 list, although Hobbs, MacRae and Van Lennep have all raced F1 at some time. F5000 is popular with British crowds, and rightly so. It is popular with entrants because the meetings are largely one day affairs and therefore are fairly economical to attend. However, I do not like to see F5000 edging out F2. I believe the two can run side by side with F5000 as a very useful National formula in Great Britain but with F2 continuing as Europe's major formula as a stepping stone for aspiring F1 drivers. We have a similar situation with F Atlantic which in England appears to be trying to take the place of F3. It is perhaps a little-known fact that in 1974 there are scheduled 32 British F3 races and 52 European F3 races—a massive total of 84 races for what I believe to be the best junior formula of all. In 1974, F3 cars will become very much more difficult to drive as the engine capacity has been raised to 2-litres. This will make the engines far more powerful but, as wheel rim widths remain the same as this year, will also make the cars much more difficult to drive.

I do feel there is a need for a well-supported junior International formula; perhaps it could be a combination of F Atlantic and F3 but at some stage a driver should come into contact and race against competitors of differing nationality on strange circuits and this will give him and any observers a true yardstick of his capabilities.

I believe that the FIA, when granting a World Championship date, should insist that the organiser of the World Championship event should support other FIA formulae, not necessarily at the same circuit but certainly organised by the same club in the same country. For example, a Formula One Championship date ought to carry with it the requirement to stage a European 2-litre Championship race and two International F3 races at other times during the year.

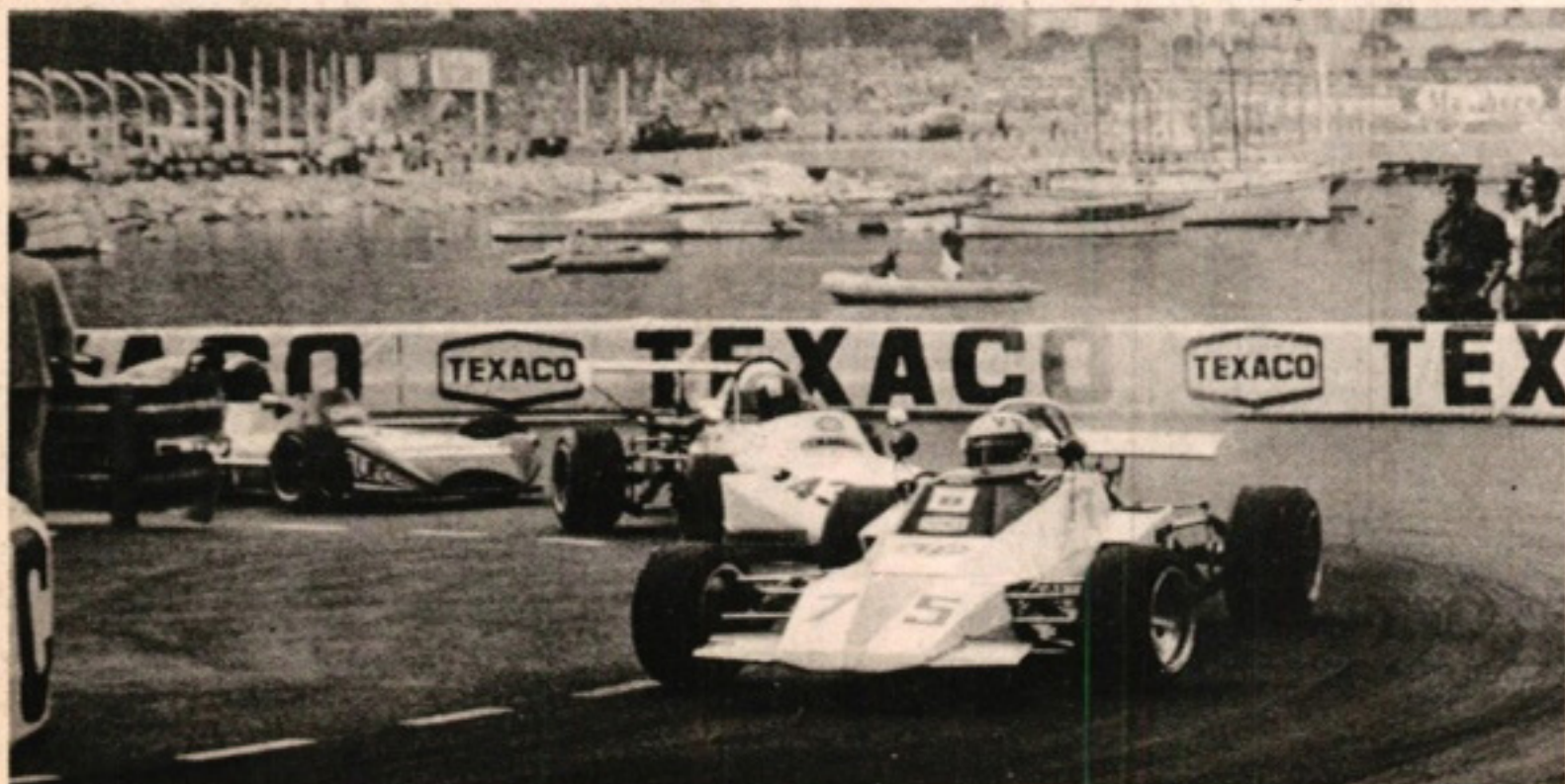
Similarly, a European World Championship Sportscar race organiser should be obliged to put on a Formula 2 race and two International F3 races. By this means an organiser who derives financial benefit from a World Championship category of racing is then obliged to reinvest a proportion of his profit in the other categories.

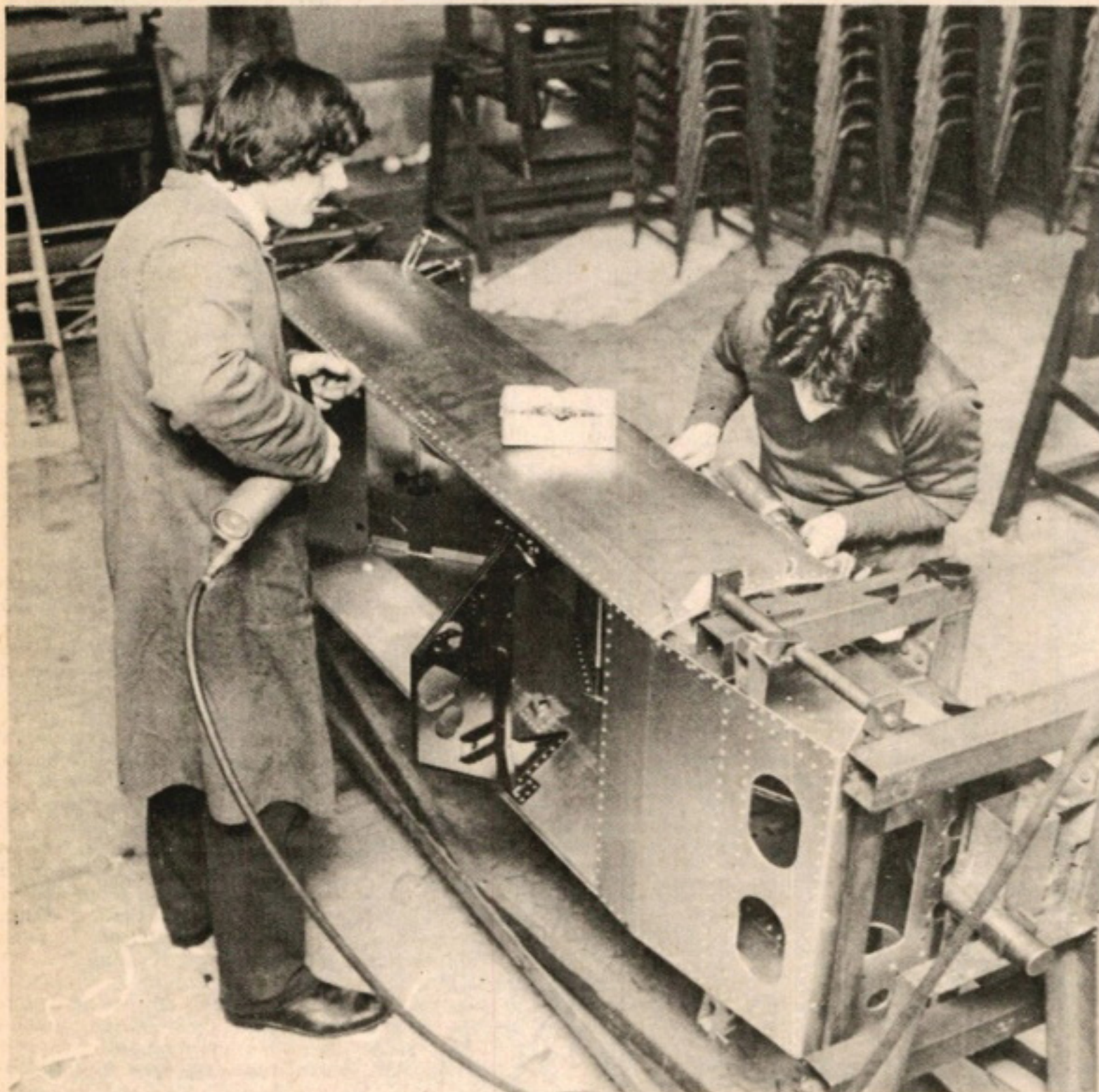
Safety aspects

It has been suggested that some circuits are becoming too dangerous because of faster lap times and that they should be altered to slow the cars down on grounds of safety. I do not think it is a very sensible course of action to require circuits to keep altering their layouts just because what is essentially an advancement in tyres becomes so great that from one viewpoint a particular corner on a circuit becomes super fast. Taking Woodcote at Silverstone as an example, there is a large run-off area by the side of the track before Armco covered sleeper barriers (recommended by and installed with the approval of the Safety Committee of the CSI). Furthermore there is a very tall wire mesh catchfence to prevent any possibility of accident debris finding its way into the Grandstands.

It would be fair to say that Silverstone have complied with every safety requirement in relation to this corner and still have in Woodcote a demanding, exciting superfast but safe corner. The sort of corner that thrills crowds and challenges drivers' skill. I do not like to see oppressive limitations on designers of cars any more than rather hysterical demands for limitations to circuits. We should all strive to make motor racing as safe as is humanly possible, but it will never be a safe sport and those competing realise and accept the realities of the situation full well.

"It is a little-known fact that in 1974 there are scheduled 32 British and 52 European F3 races."





Work on the rolling jig on a March monocoque at Arch.

Indeed, one feels, the early days were the best. There weren't big labour costs; the designs were fairly simple, and there weren't so many racing car manufacturers. Furthermore, general overheads weren't so high. Such early work included Lotus 23s and 24s, of which 20 were made, but Bob Robinson's favourite was the Lola Mk 1 which he particularly remembers as being the first car he really enjoyed building.

However, in the early days, there were many bits and pieces being built, perhaps not sufficient complete racing cars, and after some time, Robinson began to rationalise the production of the components. With large runs of cars like the Lotus 24 coming in, but admittedly from a then fairly limited number of racing manufacturers, it was felt by the directors of Arch Motors that larger premises had to be found, and the move was made to Huntingdon around 1966.

Early in their life at Huntingdon came the Formula Ford boom, and with it came a whole host of Formula Ford constructors, each vying with one another with various different designs and each contributing to the fields with a number of cars. And yet, about this time, one of Arch's principal clients, Lotus dropped away from them on the racing car side and adopted them on the production side, a source of their business which they naturally still feel very dear to them after 15 years. The making of jigs in this hectic FF era, the production of cars at such a great rate per day in winter, and the slack hours the rest of year meant that Arch were open 24 hours a day from November to April, and then sitting around in the summer doing the occasional repair and helping out on Lotus production.

Since those days, it may be worth noting that the labour force of Arch Motors at their present premises in Huntingdon has risen from 10 or 12 people to about 50. Between the early days in Huntingdon and now, Arch have dealt with all the major motor racing designers and manufacturers: Ensign, Titan (now doing their own work nearby), MRE, Lola (also close by), Van Diemen, March, Chevron (now doing their own work), Brabham, Mallock, Gryphon (new neighbours), Elden, Merlyn, Tui and Royale, not to mention currently doing chassis work for both Lotus at Wymondham and chassis for the Lotus 7 for Caterham Car sales who currently market the Seven.

In this way, Bob Robinson has the experience to be quite a critic on the subject of racing car design, for between him and his production staff, it is up to Arch to make up the majority of jigs on which the current racing cars are constructed. The easiest car to build, says Bob, was the old Merlyn Mk 11/17, and it is perhaps interesting that this car is still around on the tracks and winning races despite the presence of many later models in the Formula. "It's fashion really," says Bob,

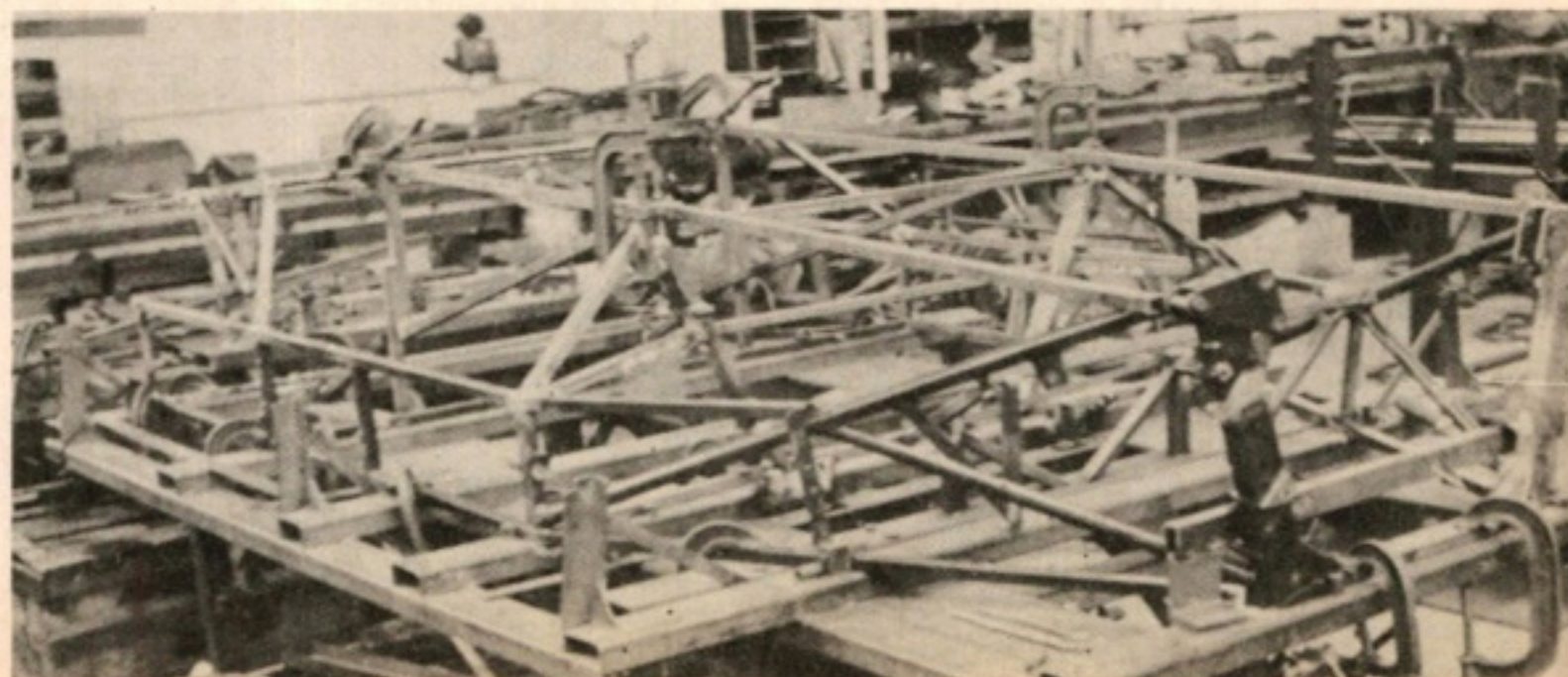
Arch Motors—vital to the motor racing scene

If one was asked to name a most important yet curiously faceless contractor in motor racing, there would be one name which would immediately spring to mind: Arch Motors. Their name isn't on an engine, nor chassis, nor on any of the suspension joints. They have never built their own car, yet have built hundreds for many constructors, and there are very few constructors in the motor racing field for whom they have not done some sort of work. Still more curious is that their beginnings were not in motor racing, and most sadly, their destiny and growth takes them away from the "small order," "wanted it last week" world of motor racing. And yet Arch Motors are still the fairest of businessmen to the individual in motor racing, and it is possibly only unfortunate that they cannot accept everyone who comes to their door.

Arch weren't always that big as Colin Chapman will know. Their entrance into the sporting field was with motorcycles, for current managing director Bob Robinson and Ted Young were both sidecar enthusiasts and began making frames for their adversaries. However, ultimately they saw that this wasn't the most lucrative of businesses, and, under an arch in Hornsey (hence the name: Arch), they began to build motoring frames. One of their first customers in the late fifties was

one Colin Chapman who at that time was operating from his premises in Cheshunt. Lola too, now nearby neighbours in Huntingdon to Arch Motors were early customers, and Arch began making racing car and performance car chassis their principal tasks.

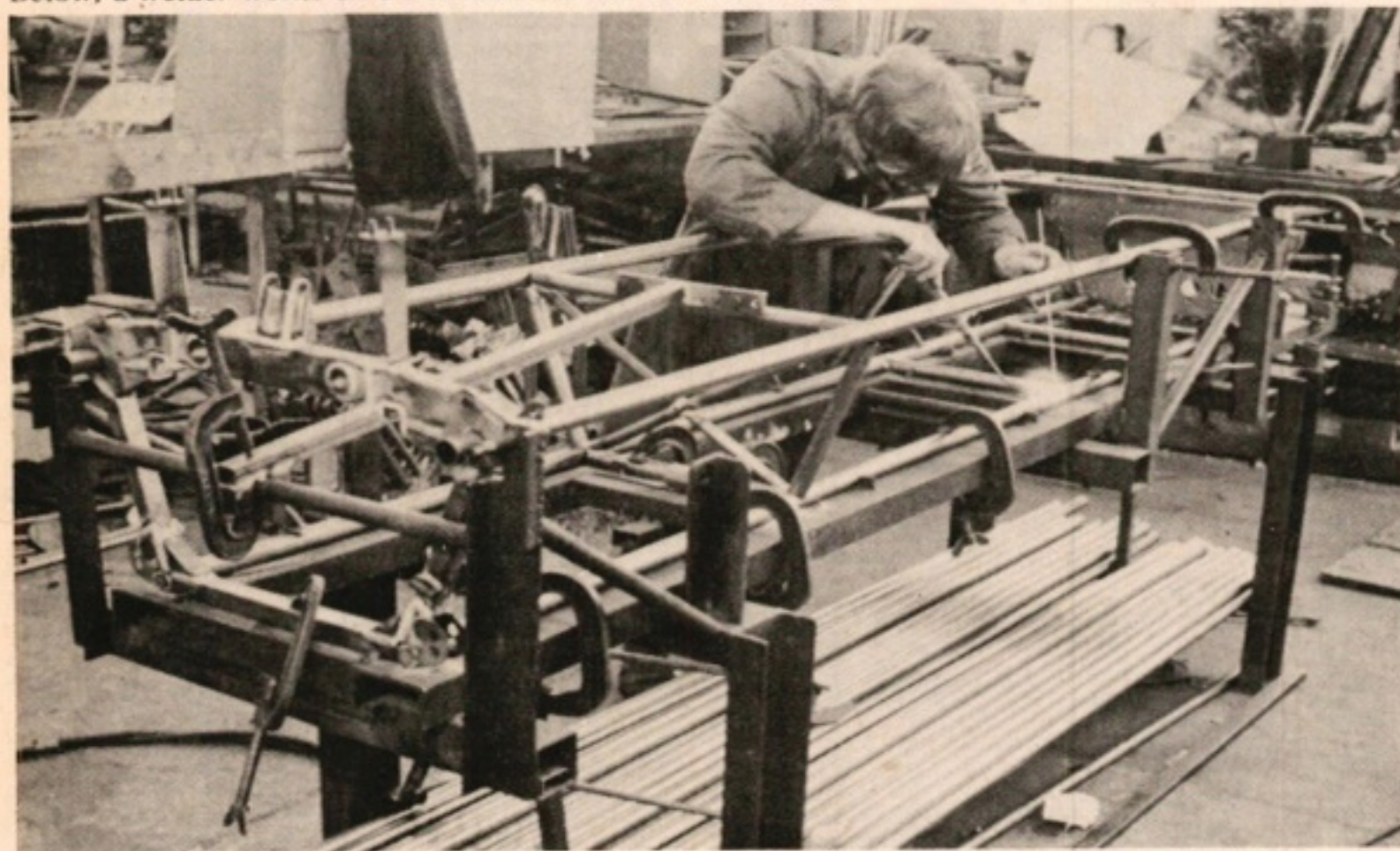
What is jig and what is chassis? This jumble of tubes is a Chevron B19 in for repairs!



Tune in



Garbage Arch style! Irreparable March tubs and discarded tubing outside Arch's back door. Below, a welder works on a Formula Ford chassis in the jig.



"when you look at a front-engined Mallocks going round just as quickly as the F3 boys." One might think that initial drawings might produce a problem for the men at Arch, but they say that in general, the drawing standard is high and fairly clear, although in the past they've received drawings on wall paper, etc!

So how is a car constructed. Well, it might be unfair to mention only now that March are one of their biggest customers, and if you thought you knew the origins of the name March, you still do for Arch are only involved in the business stakes. Their single-seater monocoque is the only one to be constructed on the premises, so it is easy to get rid of that side of the business in a single stroke. Arch have, in fact, been making the March monocoque for three years and it might confound critics to know that from the tub construction side, the design has not changed very much. The actual castings are bolted on to a rolling

framework, and the skin is then riveted on to that framework. Because the monocoque may be turned over many times on the rolling basis, it does not take much time for the tub to formulate.

On the other hand, a chassis with all its welding may take 50 to 60 hours. Arch are capable of doing many sorts of welding including Argon, CO₂ and bronze. Initially a jig is welded together into which the tubes of the chassis are placed and then welded on to one another. With final assembly taking place outside the jig, the chassis are then rejigged to ensure that no twist has taken place in the final assembly, something that very often takes place round the cockpit area. The business of stove enamelling then takes place, whereby the chassis is spray painted with enamel and then baked for half an hour with each coat, a finish which is almost second to none.

Having produced a jig, it is perhaps worth mentioning that poor old Arch feel duty

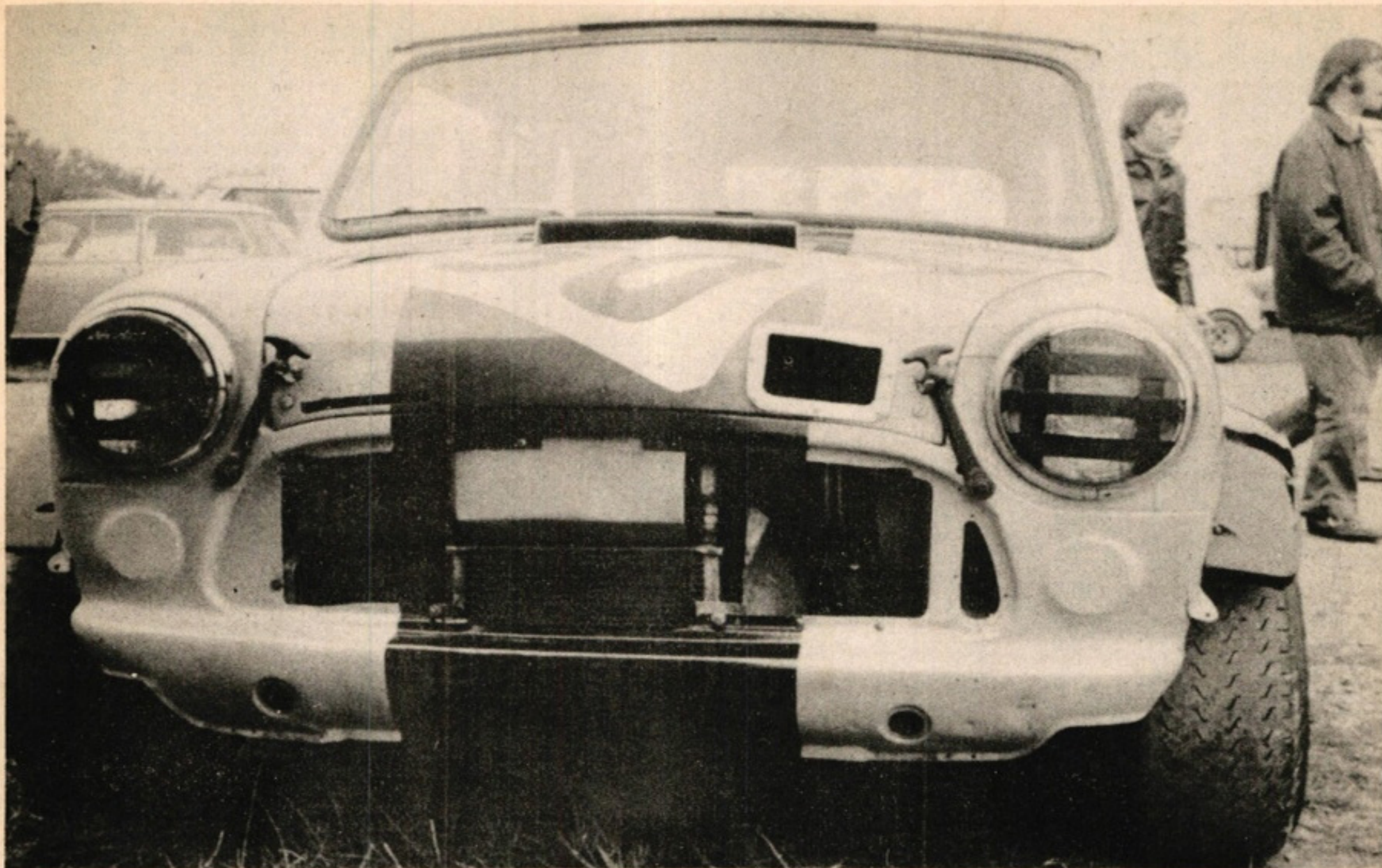
bound to keep them, which means that some bloke in South Africa may ring up at any time and ask if they could re-jig his Brabham BT8 or some similar early model car. Jigs are not economical on space, and Arch are becoming increasingly disenchanted with the repair business, as they can't throw away any jigs, nor can they really afford the time to do the repairs when they come in. On the other hand, the occasional repair, and I say the word occasional with great meaning, can give work to a welder when he may not otherwise be occupied.

Arch feel their position in the motor racing world very strongly. Five years ago, says Bob, they were doing 70 per cent motor racing, and now it is half that. To some extent it is motor racing's fault, to some extent their own. The upsurge of the sport has allowed smaller firms to come into the field who have smaller overheads, don't mind working odd hours in the "on" season, and short hours in the "off" season. Meanwhile he says, "We owe what we are today to motor racing and yet we have outgrown it." The work for Lotus is of course on a regular basis, while they also make metal stools for a local firm. Perhaps at this time, Arch's contract to make 10 electric Enfield 5000 Electric cars per week is the most significant, while a plan is also on the cards to make fun karts for a local firm called Aerokarts at Kimbolton. Many March tubs are still under construction, and Elden and Royale chassis were still in evidence when we visited their premises, with hefty MRE chassis also under construction. Van Diemen too rely on Arch for their chassis.

These days, Arch are well stocked up on the metal working side to do the varied jobs that they currently do. There's a sheet metal shop which virtually is self-supporting, a fabrication shop for welding of tubular chassis and the welding from the sheet metal shop, the machine shop which comes in useful for suspension parts, etc, turned out by Arch, and the paint shop which speaks for itself. On the sheet metal side, there's all the usual tools such as Pierce-All, guillotines, brake press, handfolder, notcher and fly press. In the machining section there are capstans, a centre-lathe willing and drilling machines.

Staffing Arch Motors is obviously quite a problem with so many different welders and sections and this comes under the general manager, Don Gadd, who was an apprentice with Bob Robinson at technical college, while directors now include Ted Young's brother Allan, and Ted's widow Jean. Perhaps a word might be included about Arch's neighbours, because immediately you've found Arch's premises on the Huntingdon Trading Estate, you look next door and there is another motor racing "name": Specialised Mouldings. Obviously with their proximity, Arch and SM managed to save money on deliveries, etc, and in the beginning, when they both moved up in conjunction with one another, it was their idea in so doing. What with various other motor racing constructors, already mentioned, this area is quite a hive of the sport.

So what comes from Arch in the future. As Bob Robinson said, they feel they've rather outgrown the world of motor sport, although obviously they still have work from some of the major constructors viz March. Their beginnings have been in motor cars, and Bob Robinson seems to have an eye in that direction. It seems to be the regular contract work that Arch are after, the days of waiting for the motor racing man to give them an order for ten chassis and then says he wants them tomorrow seems to be over for Arch. However, make no mistake; Arch have a conscience towards the motor racing industry and one feels that if they can, they'll stay there rather than make chair frames or mundane tubular steel products.



The giant killer! Winner outright of the Forward Trust Championship and runner-up in the MCD series, the Crouch/Dineen Mini.

Victory without garlands —a valiant effort

With one, and later, a couple of 850 Minis, Peter Crouch and Neil Dineen looked like taking the major honours of both the Forward Trust and MCD special saloon championships. In the end, Crouch won the Forward Trust one overall and Dineen was runner-up and comfortable class winner in the MCD series.

With what must be the most consistently fast 850 special saloon car in the country, these two enthusiasts have almost done the impossible in winning both series without any external source of finance. Peter is a GPO mechanic and Neil is a rep. How did they do it? Michael Luck takes up the story.

When did you first become interested in motor racing?

Neil: In 1971 we did 12 races with Pete's old road car; that was our first season. Before that, we had helped a lot of people who live near us in the New Forest to prepare their racing cars; you see, there are about five other racing Minis within a two mile radius of where we live. But one day we were at Castle Combe when a chap said he had an old Simca and he didn't know what to do with it. We picked it up on our way back—Pete used it as a road car and we converted his Mini into a racer. Mind you the Simca was so rusty that if you jacked it up you couldn't open the doors; it eventually disintegrated one day on the way to

Downton.

What modifications did you carry out on that Mini?

Neil: It was as rusty as an old horseshoe! We stripped it out, cut out the boot floor and put in perspex windows and lightweight doors. The engine was a long-stroke 850 which was fairly quick and we were doing times then which a lot of short-stroke 850s aren't beating now.

How much did that first season cost?

Pete: The cylinder head and tyres were the two most expensive items, but I suppose the whole thing didn't cost more than about £700. That gave each of us six club races—just enough to get the taste.

Neil: It nearly cost us more. The first race I did, the starting ring came off the flywheel and I had to have a push start from the back of the grid. I drove magnificently down the track—I was in last place—I overtook the bloke in front of me so that I wasn't last, and promptly spun off. In my excitement I forgot to brake for the next bend! In fact between us in that first season we must have spun off at every bend on every circuit we went to. We then decided to build a short-stroke engine for the next season because the only person we couldn't beat, Graham Janzen, had one in his car. I almost did beat him once at Thruxton when I was using some borrowed Firestones, but had a moment with another car and couldn't quite catch him before the end.

What, then, were the origins of your present car?

Pete: We bought the bodyshell secondhand, although it had never been used. It has no "sealastic" in it and that makes it quite a bit lighter. We actually built the car in the winter of 1971/72, but it was not completed until July '72.

We put the beam axle in that season, which took a lot of sorting and an awfully long time to build. The idea came when we were at the pub one day and someone jokingly suggested that nobody had a Mini with a beam axle mounted on leaf springs. We thought "that's a good idea" and trotted off home and made one.

When you say that you went home and made one, do you mean that literally?

Pete: Well, we had a pint first! But seriously, yes, we did make it. We know someone down the road with a lathe and another chap with an arc welder, and we went home and cut the bits of metal up, welded it all together and fitted it on. The design was done on our drawing board—the garage wall—and we fitted it in place as we built it. Mind you, it took a couple of months of very hard work just to make it, but it has certainly proved worth the effort.

When finally we got the car together we went down to see John Pope at 7 o'clock one Saturday morning as he was going to spray the car for us. We had to weld on the front and rear valences, and we finally went home at 5 o'clock on Sunday morning having worked solidly for 22 hours. By then we were absolutely stoned on spray-gas, but the man just wouldn't stop working.

Neil: Then we had the engine to fit. I suppose the cost of the short-stroke motor was about £500 at the time, but we had a lot of the bits already. The Gordon Allen crank was £127—the whole car cost about £1000 for the season. We did six races—I had five wins and one second and Peter had three wins and three seconds; we ended up third in both the Forward Trust and Triplex Championships, and we hadn't been competing in them



The drivers: Peter Crouch (left) and Neil Dineen (right).

seriously by any means.

So, with these eight wins and four seconds between you, out of 12 races in your first proper season, you decided to do it seriously in 1973?

Pete: Yes. We decided to go for championships and so, at the beginning of the season, we tossed a coin to see who would compete in which championship. I won and elected to go for the Forward Trust Championship. Neil did the MCD series; next year it will be Neil's turn to go for whichever championship he chooses.

At the beginning of the 1973 season Neil had eight consecutive wins, and by the end had 10 class wins and one second to give him second place in the MCD Championship. The other four times he started, something blew up and he did not finish. I was luckier; I had 11 class wins and two seconds from 13 starts. That won me the Forward Trust Championship.

Also this year we have taken the class lap records at Mallory Park, Croft, Thruxton, Silverstone (club), Snetterton, Castle Combe, Oulton Park, Rufforth, Brands Hatch (short), and Brands Grand Prix, the last of which we beat by 5 seconds.

How much planning was involved in what, by any standards was a successful season?

Neil: None. We just went out and seemed to beat everyone. If we could get organised we could build a winning car. You may say we've got a winning car! But that's more luck than judgment. Pete might have paid more money towards the car this year, and I know that he's put in more time on it, but these are not things we argue about. If we did, our relationship wouldn't last; we would lose trust in each other. When we first decided to go racing, we said that we wanted to win at any cost, and that's what we've done. We haven't let any side issues interfere, but we aren't too strong on the planning side.

Tell me about the car as it is at present.

Pete: It's a 970 cc Cooper S block, bored out to plus 60 thou, skimmed and de-stroked, with an Allen crankshaft to bring it down to 850 cc. We have had problems with blocks—two have gone this year. One blew up, literally, when we had it on the brake. The studs pulled out of the block and the whole lot let go in a sheet of flame—it was very spectacular!

The rods are 970 S, and the pistons are Hepolite Powermax. Richard Longman did all the original measurements and machining and George Toth who works with him did the machining of the head. We use two twin Webers with half of each blanked off to give a straight inlet flow. The gearbox is straight-forward BMC competition, built up from bits out of other people's dustbins because we couldn't afford them ourselves. The only difference is that the lay gear between the crank and gearbox is 1.08:1 instead of 1:1. This gives us a final drive of about 4.9:1 and a little bit more at the top end.

Apart from that, we have fully rose-jointed suspension, a fibreglass bonnet, boot and one door, the other being aluminium.

Why did you discard the air dam which you fitted in the middle of the season which seemed to make a big difference to your times?

Neil: "Seemed" is the word. It got too expensive knocking it off every time we hit a bump. But quite apart from that, it made absolutely no difference to our times. Everyone thought it did and turned up with air dams the next week. We didn't like to discourage them!

How do you get the car to meetings?

Neil: We bought an old GPO van in Devon for £25 which took us two days to drive home going flat out. We stripped it inside, built a bit on the back so that the Mini would fit in and away we went. Unfortunately, one day we were slipstreaming a Mini trying to overtake him and the engine literally blew up. So then we bought a 4 litre BMC straight six from a scrapyard and with the skilful use of a mallet, hacksaw and no less than nine acquaintances recruited from the local hostelry, we installed it at 12 o'clock one night. It was MoT'd the next morning—and it passed!

The Mini sometimes indulged in some three-wheel motoring, as at Mallory Park's hairpin.



The only mishap was, before we put it in it was dropped and the sump broke and we ended up with a couple of gallons of nasty black oil all over the drive. On the serious side, we sleep in it and have parties in it; it has saved us a lot of money. But it eats dynamos—you can almost hear it chewing them up.

What are your plans for the future?

Neil: We had thought of moving into a bigger class where we might get more recognition. This year has been very poor. We're very lucky to even get our names in print. For instance, even though Pete won the Forward Trust Championship, in one motor sport paper he didn't even get a mention in the race report. People seem to think that 850 racing is "Mickey Mouse" but we know that our car is quicker than a lot of 1000s around. I reckon I could have had at least one outright win last season, but it's not worth risking the car when we're miles ahead of the next person in our class—you don't get much extra for winning the race, certainly not enough to warrant taking a chance of blowing the motor or tangling with someone who isn't even in your class.

We would like to move into the bigger class but just can't afford it. To be competitive we would have to have a Ford-engined car and that is running into the range of £2,000-£3,000 for an engine, which will probably blow up at the first opportunity. No, we will have to stick to the 850—but we've got a few more tweaks up our sleeves for next season, but you'll have to wait to see what they are.

Pete: Yes, we'll keep to the 850 next year and do two championships again, this time with Neil getting preference. We are at present looking for a sponsor, though, for despite all the help we get from people like Richard, George, Alan Holloway and John Peachey-Austing (who has lent us an awful lot of stuff this year), and without who we wouldn't be able to go racing, it is becoming so expensive to stay competitive that we now need some external finance which we have never had before.

In the long term, I think that the proposed silhouette formula looks like an exciting proposition, but Neil wants to go into single seaters. The only drawback with that is that it's a full time occupation and of course that it's so fantastically expensive. But basically, we are only planning for next season at the moment—we don't believe in looking too far ahead.



Taking part in an autotest requires a considerable amount of skill.

Autotesting explained

One of the most fascinating branches of motor sport is a driving test, or as it is better known today, an autotest. In contrast to the other much better known forms of the sport such as autocross, rallycross, sprinting and production car trialling, the autotest competitor is considerably less well known. In the main this is because events, by force of circumstances, are generally held on private property and accordingly they do not get the same exposure as their counterparts.

An autotest is, quite simply, the ability to drive one's car as quickly as possible through a series of markers, and perform certain manoeuvres in the quickest time possible. All very simple you might say. But it demands skill and concentration of a high order as well as a fair memory, for the tests can otherwise become maddening puzzles. Everyone, if he is honest, thinks he is a Stirling Moss or a Jackie Stewart as soon as he passes his driving test but put the majority of club members into an autotest for the first time and they suddenly realise they don't know as much as they think they do.

For instance have you ever tried parking that Mini or Ford of yours in a space where there is less than a foot on either side? What about high speed travel in and out of a series of pylons, spinning the car through 180 degrees and then doing it in reverse? Both exercises of course against the clock.

By now your interest should have been aroused so a few words about what goes on. Clubs running meetings invariably use large car parks, or parts of disused or even operational airfields (with the permission of the clerk of course). At a typical event a driver can expect to find a dozen tests arranged for him to tackle individually and, depending on the space available, one or more tests may be laid out at a time. The rules governing the choosing or designing of a test are quite simple: it must not exceed 200 yards in length.

Having decided the tests the organisers invariably send a copy of them, in diagram form, to every competitor when they enter. This allows everyone the chance to memorise each test thoroughly before coming to the competition. The object then is to perform each test as quickly as possible, in the correct order, and to avoid hitting the marker cones and overshooting lines. It should be remembered that no practice is allowed on the day at the site and that every mistake costs time and every marker knocked over means more precious seconds added to the time taken.

The most spectacular part of the autotest

is to watch a driver spinning his car deliberately (we all do the other sort). A competitor will nearly always be required to change from forward motion to backwards without stopping his vehicle on at least one test and it is always a delight to see a top class competitor spin his car, almost on a sixpence, with the minimum of fuss and equally the least amount of time lost. The handbrake is always used to effect this manoeuvre but the technique varies between a car with driven front wheels to one with rear wheel drive. The principle, however, is always the same and that is to lock the rear wheels and hang the tail out.

It follows that accurate timing and precise co-ordination are necessary otherwise the audience is highly amused and the driver annoyed and embarrassed if his vehicle slides wildly in all directions. Also spectacular is the reverse spin, carried out when proceeding

in a straight line from one point to another. It is necessary to have a fair head of steam up before attempting the spin and it requires precise judgment as to when to change gear during the spin. Couple this with wheel twiddling to get it pointed straight, and off you go at high speed in the other direction. However, be warned—this is an exercise which can produce a broken gearbox very easily and at worst you can topple right over—so leave it to the experts.

Classes in an autotest are usually based on the length of the wheelbase and not the capacity of the vehicle. In championship meetings there are invariably four categories: open cars with a wheelbase up to 7 ft 1 in; saloons with wheelbase under 7 ft 1 in; specials and saloons and open cars with wheelbase more than 7 ft 1 in. A special is defined as being a vehicle which is not catalogued by any manufacturer and in most cases such vehicles are subject to a 5 per cent handicap. Most popular cars are the Minis and their variants, Sprites and MG Midgets, VWs and Fords.

When preparing a car for an event it is best to concentrate on making the handbrake really efficient, checking the engine to ensure it does not stall (most drivers do the tests with a fast tickover to prevent this) and, where possible altering the suspension for more stability, always providing it is within the regulations and the spirit of the event.

Autotests are popular with most clubs and, if, after getting the bug, you feel competent enough to tackle a national championship you can choose either the RAC autotest championship or the Castrol/BT and RDA Flather Star championship with about 20 events all over the country. Entry fees vary but as a rough guide you can expect to fork out £3 per event and of course you need a competition licence from the RAC before tackling nothing but a closed to club meeting. One final word: if you are ever on holiday in Ireland and you hear of an autotest pop along and watch for in the last few years lads from the Emerald Isle have licked the pants off the English, Scots and Welsh in the annual International Ken Wharton Memorial team event, held every year around November in the Midlands.

DEREK HILL

Quiz—Answers to the questions

in last week's issue

- A.—Emerson Fittipaldi leads Bev Bond, Roy Pike and Howden Ganley.
- B.—Adrian Chambers leads Bob Burnard, John E. Miles, Eric Falce and Tommy Entwistle.
- C.—France, it was the supercharged 1½ CTA-Arsenal.
- D.—500 racing. Rex McCandless, McCandless Special and it was 4 wd.
- E.—Dan Gurney and Ian Burgess. Entrant of Gurney is Louise Bryden-Brown.
- F.—1967, M. Hrubon's Hrubon, powered by a 1300 cc Gordini engine.
- G.—It is the IRA driven by Joe Kelly and used a 2-litre Bristol engine.
- H.—Photograph shows André Pilette, father of this year's Rothmans Championship winner.
- I.—Kenneth Evans and (helping to hold board) Bill Ruck-Keene.
- J.—Bob Bean.
- K.—Toyota Corolla, Vic Elford, David Stone, 1970 Monte Carlo Rally.
- L.—The 1954 Ulster TT race and drivers were Paul Armagnac and Gerard Laureau.
- M.—L to R: Zazada, Staepelaere and Kallstrom.

N.—The Saxon powered by a DKW engine and driven by C. Scott-MacArthur.

O.—Charles Crichton-Stuart at Aintree in 1964. Entrant was Anglo-Scottish Racing Team.

- 1.—Jimmy Bryan.
- 2.—British GP in 1970 and Oulton Park Gold Cup, 1970.
- 3.—British GP at Silverstone in 1954.
- 4.—Xavier Perrot and Hannelore Werner Nürburgring.
- 5.—Longford, Tasmania.
- 6.—Novara.
- 7.—Montjuich Park—the only circuit on which races are run in an anti-clockwise direction.
- 8.—Peter Sellers Racing Team. Brian Hart and Barrie Hart.
- 9.—The 1961 Dutch GP.
- 10.—The 750 cc DB supercharged flat-twin of 1955 and the 3-litre V8 of the Honda RA 302 in 1968.
- 11.—Carroll Shelby's racing Ford-engined AC Cobras in the GT category in 1965.
- 12.—John Surtees about the Chaparral 2H.
- 13.—Troy Ruttman.
- 14.—The 1923 Gran Premio Vettura at Brescia won by Cagno's Fiat.
- 15.—Stirling Moss, Jack Fairman, Bert Hadley and Leslie Johnson.

● We hope it provided some amusement over the Christmas holiday!

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DE TOMASO, MTC Cars UK, officially appointed specialists. 173 Westbourne Grove, London, W11. Tel: 01-727 3445.

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AUTOSPORT PRESS TIME

for

JANUARY 3, 1974

Display: All copy mid-day, December 28.

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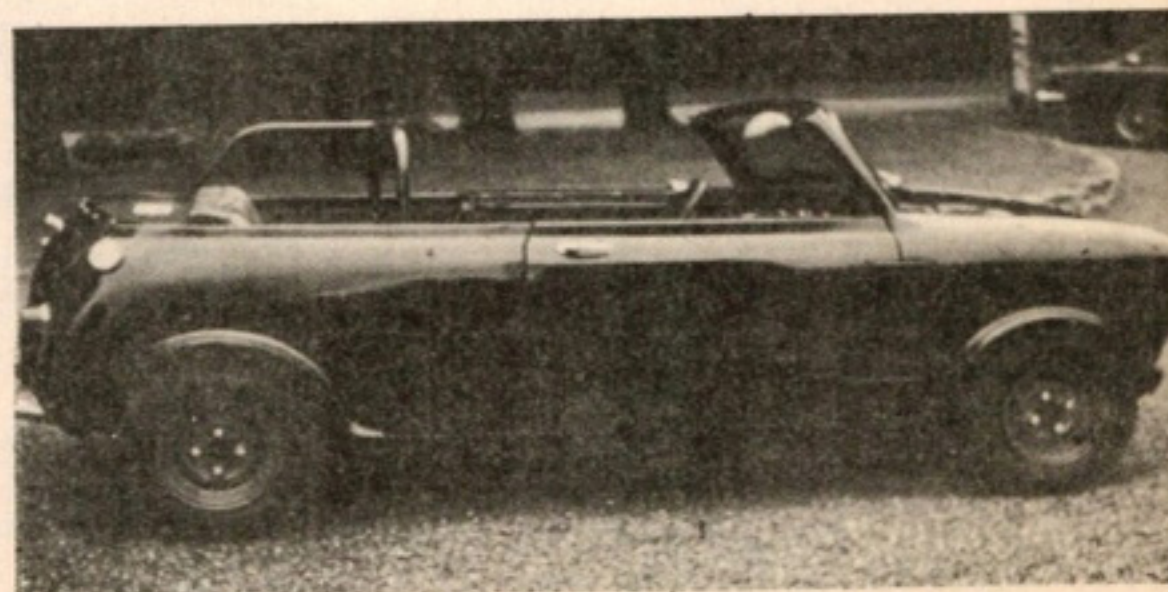
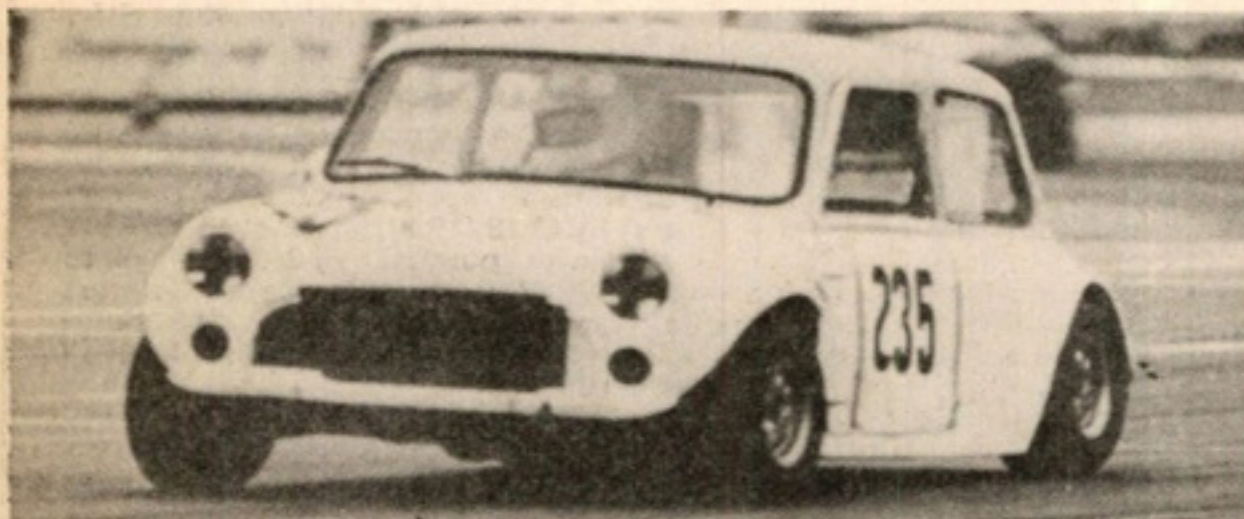
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A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a lit Rothmans cigarette. The hand is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the frame. The background is a dark, textured surface, likely a car dashboard, featuring several circular gauges and control panels with labels such as "MARETTA", "OIL PRESS", "WATER", "TEMP", "FUEL", "AIR", "ELECT", "VAPOR", "RADIO", "ECO", and "LIFEC". In the lower left foreground, an open pack of Rothmans King Size cigarettes is visible, showing several cigarettes with filters. The pack is white with blue and gold accents. The word "Rothmans" is printed in a large, white, serif font across the middle of the image, with a small crest logo above it.

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